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TOKYOPOP
The Tarot Café™
5
THE HIEROPHA
SANG-SUN PARK

# The Tarot Café

By
Sang-Sun Park
Volume 5

TOKYOPOP®

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

***The Tarot Cafe Volume 5***
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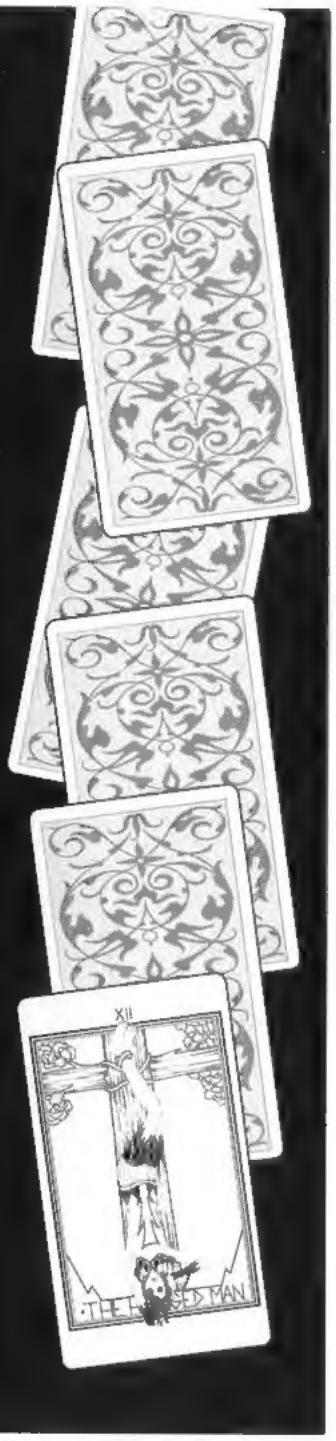
ISBN: 978-1-4278-0395-5

First TOKYOPOP printing: June 2007
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
Printed in the USA


## Story so far...

A sultan who has fallen in love with a young slave... A poor student who drives away a lake fairy over doubt and jealousy... A dragon that seeks to avenge the death of a dear friend... These are just a few of the supernatural beings that Pamela, owner of The Tarot Café, has welcomed through the doors of her mysterious establishment. But can she help them while dealing with a deep, dark secret of her own?



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## Leanan Sidhe (Two)

ILLUSTRATION FROM TAROT OF OLD PATH

*Ten of Swords: This card signifies the ruin and defeat that can follow a person; disappointment, pain, tears and jealousy.

THIS MOMENT IS LIKE THE FIRST SPARK FROM A LIT MATCH.
...I HAVE NO REGRETS OR WORRIES.

ARE YOU LISTENING, LEANAN? THIS ONE'S FOR YOU.
OH, I'M LISTENING. WITH GRATITUDE...
BECAUSE IT'S THE LAST SONG I'LL EVER SING.
SCARY.
NOTHING IS FREE IN THIS WORLD.

HE'S DISAPPEARED!

TIME TO PAY UP, SASHA.

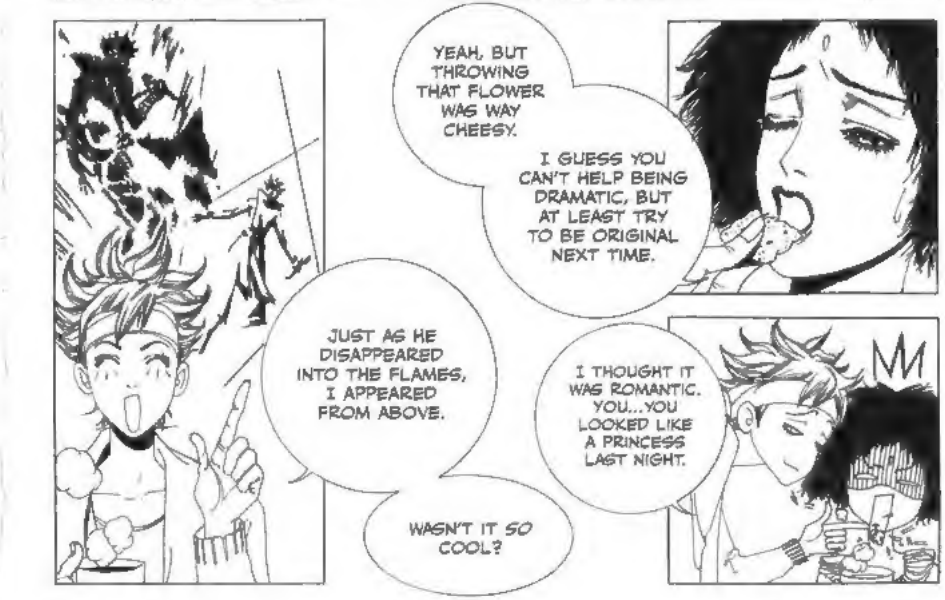
PLEASE, WON'T YOU RECONSIDER?

LAST NIGHT AT THE 45TH GRAMMY AWARDS, THE SINGER SASHA FELL TO HIS DEATH DURING HIS FIRST PERFORMANCE.
SASHA HAD BEEN NOMINATED FOR NINE CATEGORIES, AND HAD HE LIVED, WOULD HAVE TAKEN HOME EIGHT OF THE AWARDS.
L.A. TIMES
CESTA
DEAD

SASHA, WHO MANY CONSIDERED TO BE THE BEST SINGER OF OUR TIME...
...DIED IN THE PRIME OF HIS LIFE.

I WONDER IF HIS DYING SO YOUNG IS A BREACH OF CONTRACT. HE NEVER ACTUALLY REACHED THE TOP OF HIS CAREER...
HA HA HA...
TAROT
SOMETIMES EVEN YOU CAN COME IN HANDY, BELUS.

I KNOW I'M IMMORTAL, BUT FALLING LIKE THAT STILL HURTS LIKE A SON-OF-A-BITCH!
!!
LOOK AT THIS LUMP. IT'S THE SIZE OF MY FIST!
IT'S BETTER THAN BURNING TO DEATH, GETTING ELECTROCUTED, OR DROWNING, ISN'T IT?
WHEN WAS IT THAT YOU TOOK OVER FOR SASHA?


YEAH, BUT THROWING THAT FLOWER WAS WAY CHEESY.
I GUESS YOU CAN'T HELP BEING DRAMATIC, BUT AT LEAST TRY TO BE ORIGINAL NEXT TIME.
JUST AS HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE FLAMES, I APPEARED FROM ABOVE.
WASN'T IT SO COOL?
I THOUGHT IT WAS ROMANTIC. YOU...YOU LOOKED LIKE A PRINCESS LAST NIGHT.
MM

You win!!
OH PLEASE, WILL YOU STOP LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT? I THINK YOUR OLD FACE FITS BETTER WITH THAT IMAGINATION OF YOURS!
SHOULD I BECOME A SINGER, TOO? I MISS IT, YOU KNOW WHEN I SAW THE AUDIENCE CHEERING, I UNDERSTOOD HOW SASHA COULD HAVE RISKED HIS LIFE BY MAKING A DEAL WITH LEANAN.
WHATEVER! AT FIRST, YOU WERE LIKE AN ANIMAL GETTING DRAGGED TO THE SLAUGHTER-HOUSE.
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? IT'S BETTER THAN WEARING A RUBBER MASK, RIGHT?
YOU'RE A NATURAL AT DECEIVING PEOPLE--YOU DON'T NEED SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
DO YOU HAVE TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT? FOR YOU, I STILL....
CAN'T YOU SEE THE BANDAGE AROUND MY HEAD?

HELLO?
SHE'S NOT LISTENING
I WAS WONDERING WHY LEANAN ASKED ME THAT.
TEN OF RODS. This card represents being pressured to succeed, or achievement that turns into tiresome burden. It signifies that one needs to lighten their load.
TEN OF RODS
IN HINDSIGHT, I THINK I KNOW WHY SHE DID WHAT SHE DID
TWO OF SWORDS: In a situation where trouble may arise, a time of peace will follow
TWO OF SWORDS
SHE LOVED HIM. SHE KNEW HE'D DECEIVED HER AND RUN AWAY, BUT SHE CHOSE TO LET IT PASS.
THE QUESTION SHE ASKED THEN
THERE IS ONE THING I'M STILL CURIOUS ABOUT.
WERE HIS FEELINGS FOR ME GENUINE?

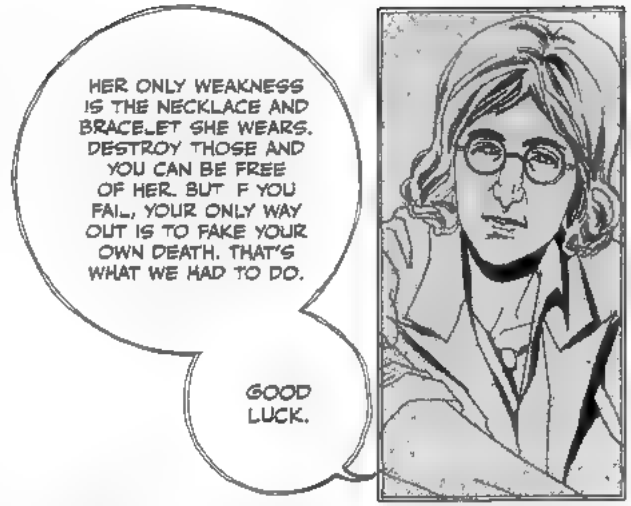
OF COURSE. SASHA LOVED HER, TOO.
THE FOOL Positive inner power that influences one's choices
FOOL
THEY JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO EXPRESS THEIR FEELINGS FOR ONE ANOTHER.
THAT'S WHY HE COULDN'T WALK AWAY FROM THE ESCALATOR ACCIDENT, EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW SHE WOULD EVENTUALLY HARM HIM


10

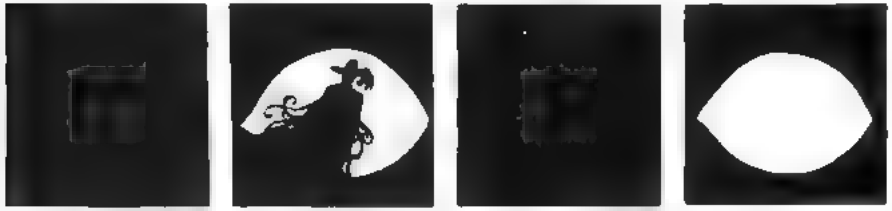
GREAT NOW, I'LL PROBABLY GO BACK TO BEING ALLEY SCUM AGAIN
IT'S KIND OF LIKE PRESSING THE "RESET" BUTTON DURING A VIDEO GAME.
FROM NOW ON, I'M GOING TO PROVE I CAN MAKE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN BY MY OWN INNER STRENGTH.

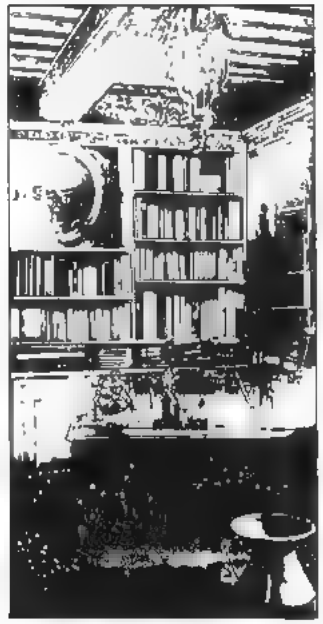
WHETHER OR NOT I SUCCEED ISN'T IMPORTANT ANYMORE.

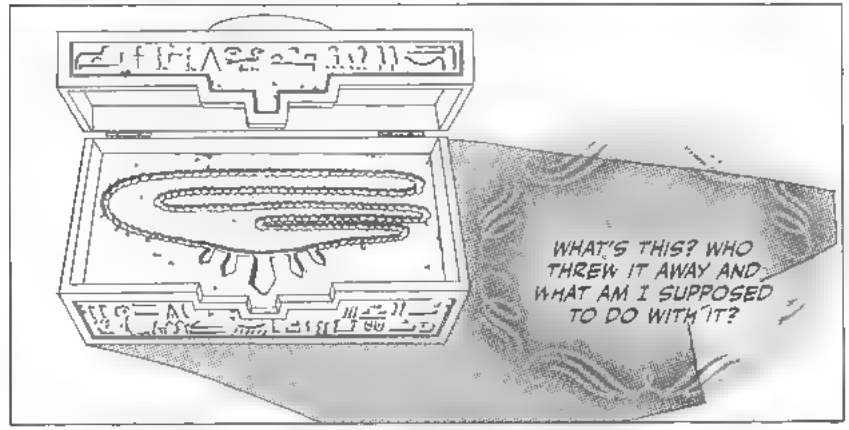
WHAT MATTERS IS THAT I CAN BE WHO I TRULY AM.


HER ONLY WEAKNESS IS THE NECKLACE AND BRACELET SHE WEARS. DESTROY THOSE AND YOU CAN BE FREE OF HER. BUT IF YOU FAIL, YOUR ONLY WAY OUT IS TO FAKE YOUR OWN DEATH. THAT'S WHAT WE HAD TO DO.
GOOD LUCK.

11
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER MY NAME IS SASHA OR RAY SPACEY.






WHAT'S THIS? WHO THREW IT AWAY AND WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH IT?

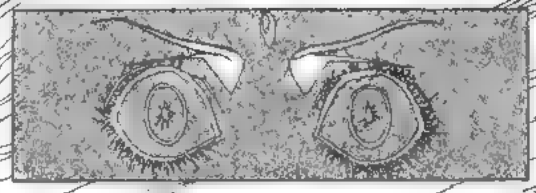
PLACE ALL THE BEADS YOU'VE COLLECTED IN THE BOX

WHO *ARE* YOU?

WHO I AM ISN'T IMPORTANT. WHAT *IS* IMPORTANT IS THE TRUTH. LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY
PLACE ALL THE BEADS YOU'VE COLLECTED INTO THIS BOX.

THEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE THE THINGS YOU COULDN'T BEFORE
THINGS I COULDN'T SEE BEFORE?

MEMORIES YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN...



YOU'RE NO SAINT

I SEE YOU.
DIRTY, VILE... DISTORTED.

.. WHO IS THAT PERSON?
. THOSE EYES
THEY LOOK SO FAMILIAR
THAT'S ME WHEN I WAS YOUNG?

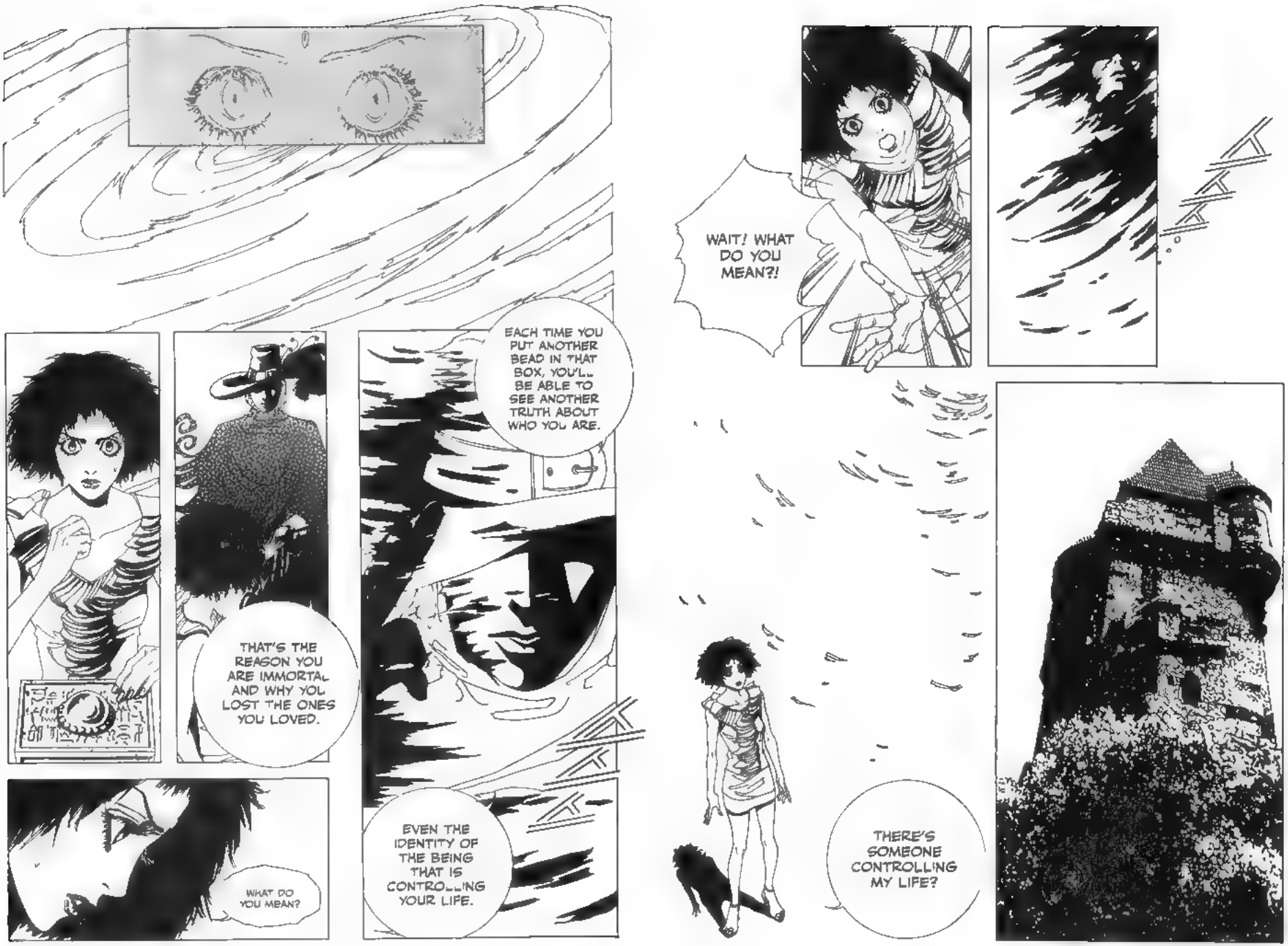

EACH TIME YOU PUT ANOTHER BEAD IN THAT BOX, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE ANOTHER TRUTH ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.
THAT'S THE REASON YOU ARE IMMORTAL AND WHY YOU LOST THE ONES YOU LOVED.
EVEN THE IDENTITY OF THE BEING THAT IS CONTROLLING YOUR LIFE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WAIT! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
THERE'S SOMEONE CONTROLLING MY LIFE?

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE HERBAL TAROT DECK

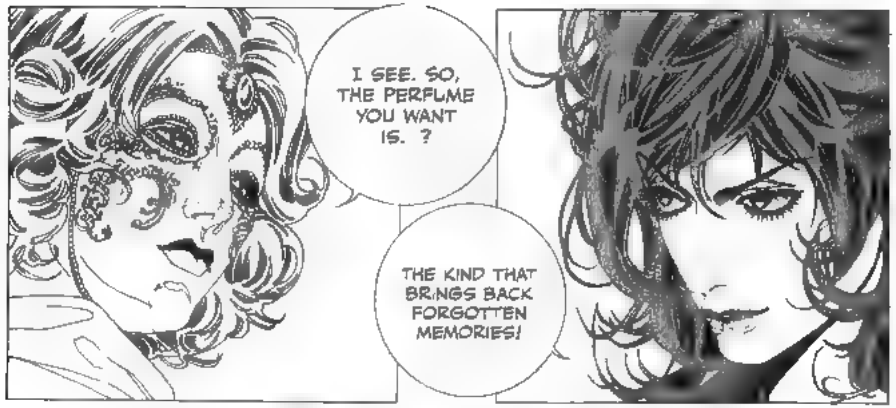
*The Magician: This card represents the power of creation, achievement and infinite possibility.

PARFUM

IT'S TRUE. IF YOUR HUSBAND SPRAYS THIS SCENT, ANY WOMAN WHO SMELLS IT...
...WILL IMMEDIATELY DIE AT THE HANDS OF HER LOVER. INTERESTED? HEH HEH HEH...

WELCOME. CAN I HELP YOU?
I CAME HERE TO BUY SOME PERFUME, BUT I ALSO CAME TO SELL YOU SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR.
?

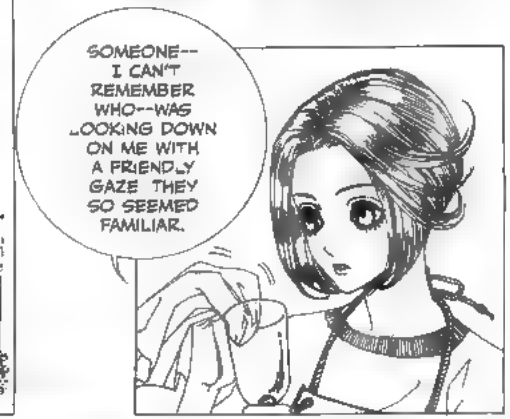
HAVEN'T YOU BEEN HUNTING FOR AN IMMORTAL HUMAN?


I SEE. SO, THE PERFUME YOU WANT IS. ?
THE KIND THAT BRINGS BACK FORGOTTEN MEMORIES!

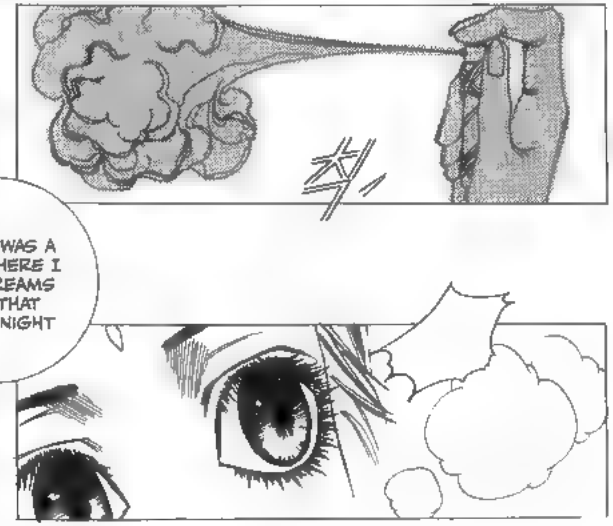
TAROT

PAMELA, I HAD A STRANGE DREAM RECENTLY.

YEAH?


SOMEONE-- I CAN'T REMEMBER WHO--WAS LOOKING DOWN ON ME WITH A FRIENDLY GAZE THEY SO SEEMED FAMILIAR.

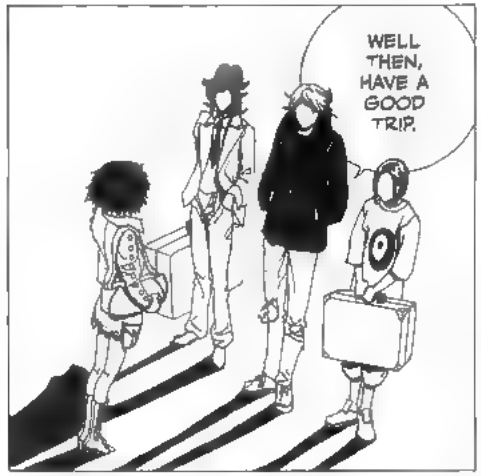
THERE WAS A TIME WHERE I HAD DREAMS LIKE THAT EVERY NIGHT



HERE, LET ME PUT IT ON YOU.
LOOK, IT'S PERFUME YOU WEAR AROUND YOUR NECK. I THOUGHT IT WOULD LOOK NICE ON YOU.
THANK YOU. IT SMELLS GOOD!
IS IT CITRUS?
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ABOUT SO INTENTLY?
OH... I WAS THINKING ABOUT GOING TO SCOTLAND
SCOTLAND?

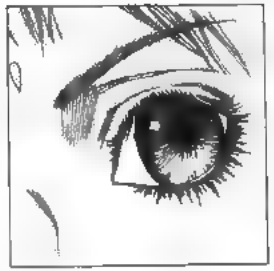
BE CAREFUL YOU CAN'T RUN A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS IF YOU TAKE OFF ALL THE TIME THE CAFÉ WILL CLOSE DOWN!
WHY SCOTLAND?
LOOK. THE JESTER CARD SIGNIFIES THE BEGINNING OF A JOURNEY.
THE FOOL this card can represent the beginning of an adventure, heading into the unknown
EVEN IF THE TRIP COULD BE DANGEROUS, THE JESTER STILL HAS TO GO.
JOURNEYS ARE MIRRORS THAT REFLECT THE PAST
THE TOWER this card represents unexpected disaster or an abrupt change in lifestyle that can lead to new realizations or the possibility of repentance
IN SCOTLAND, I CAN GET THE ANSWERS TO SOME QUESTIONS AND FIND OUT THINGS THAT ARE GOING TO HAPPEN IN MY FUTURE.
THESE ANSWERS MIGHT SHAKE ME UP A BIT.
THE HERMIT This card signifies the contemplation of the meaning of life, looking for answers within. It could also signify regret.
BUT THEY WILL ULTIMATELY SHOW ME THE WAY.

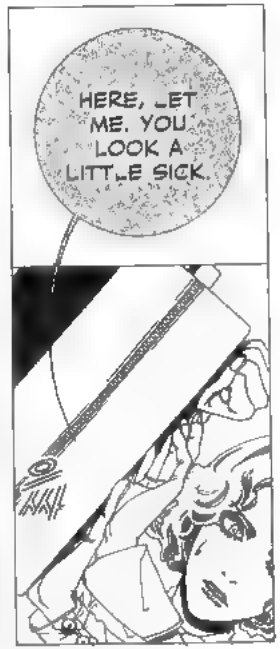
YOU KNOW, SOMEONE SHOWED ME SOMETHING ONCE...WHAT WAS IT? I NEED TO GO HOME TO FIND OUT...
WANT SOME COMPANY?
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO GO TO SCOTLAND!
LET ME GO WITH YOU!
THANKS, EVERYBODY, BUT I THINK IT'S BEST I GO BY MYSELF.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE CAFÉ I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT WHILE YOU'RE GONE
THANKS, AARON.
HAVE THE TWO OF YOU MET?
THIS IS BELUS. HAVE YOU NOT SEEN HIM AROUND BEFORE?
ARE YOU GUYS TOGETHER? LOVERS?
NO WAY!
I'M SURE WE'LL BE GOOD FRIENDS.
TH S IS ASH.


WELL THEN, HAVE A GOOD TRIP.

THIS SUCKS. WE HAVE TO GO TOGETHER NEXT TIME!
THANKS FOR SEEING ME OFF.

HAVE A GOOD TIME.




HERE, LET ME. YOU LOOK A LITTLE SICK.

HOW FAR ARE YOU GOING?
TO A SMALL VILLAGE OUTSIDE OF INVERNESS. YOU?
I'M HEADED THAT WAY, TOO WHY ARE YOU GOING THERE?
TO SEE THE TRUTH
OH, THANK YOU. YOU'RE RIGHT, I'M NOT FEELING TOO WELL.


WHOOSH

AH, YOU READ TAROT CARDS? CAN YOU DO MY READING?

..ET'S SEE...
THE EMPRESS
THE EMPRESS This card signifies an abundance of body or mind: leadership, action, and good fortune.
HMM...THIS CARD SIGNIFIES ABUNDANCE, BUT IT CAN ALSO MEAN GREED
IN THAT CASE, YOU SHOULD PURSUE MENTAL ABUNDANCE LIKE THE HIGH PRIESTESS
HIGH PRIESTESS
HIGH PRIESTESS: This card represents the feminine principles of love and relationships. She is the ideal wife and mother that grows strength in those she serves: wonder, wisdom, and influence that doesn't show externally

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT MEANS.
THIS HAS TO DO WITH YOUR INNER-SELF. THINK ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE AND IT WILL COME TO YOU.
HO HO...

THAT WAS FUN. MAYBE IT WILL BE OUR IN DESTINY TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.

I TOLD MYSELF I'D NEVER COME BACK TO THIS PLACE...

A BAGEL AND A BLACK TEA, PLEASE

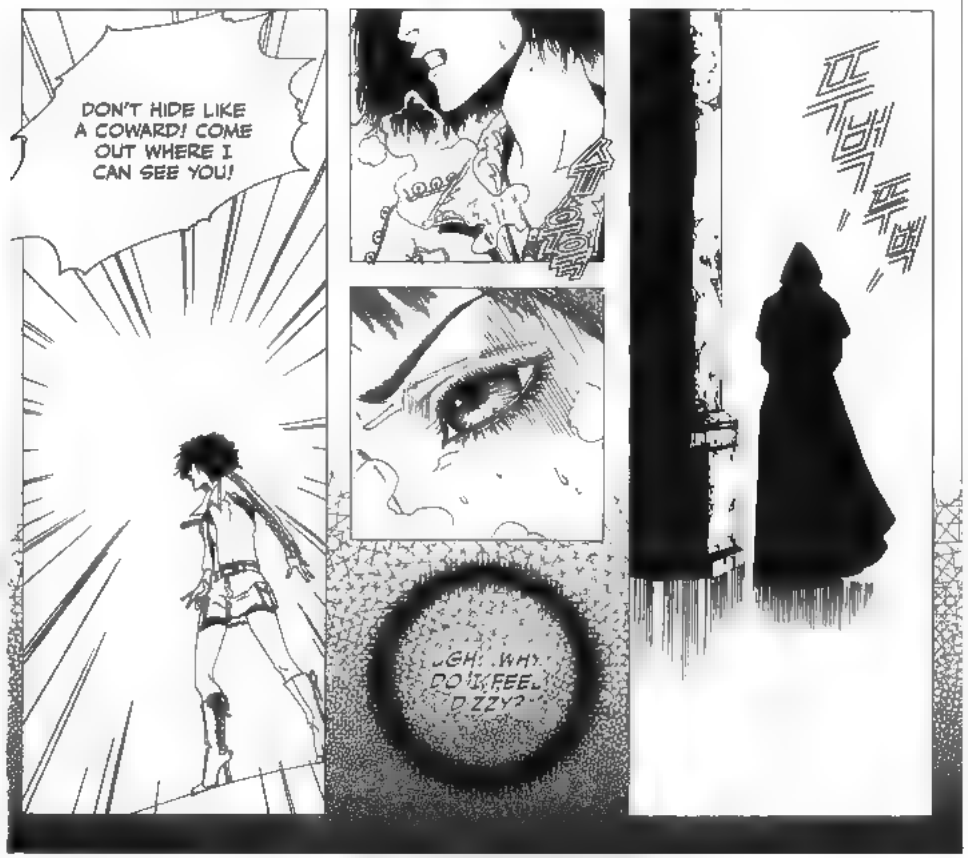
WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A FATHER, HIDING HERE AND WATCHING OVER HER. IT MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LET AARON OUT THAT NIGHT, AREN'T YOU?
DID YOU DO SOMETHING TO HARM HER?
IT WASN'T AS FUN AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE. ARE YOU HERE BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT I'D DO SOMETHING TO HARM PAMELA?
IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER, EITHER WAY; SHE CAN'T DIE ALTHOUGH SHE'D BE BETTER OFF IF SHE *WERE* DEAD
HOO HOO
I'M WARNING YOU: IF ANY HARM COMES TO PAMELA BY YOUR HAND, I'LL MAKE YOUR LIFE MISERABLE.
OOOH, I'M *SOOO* SCARED YOU MUST REALLY LOVE HER, HUH?
POWER

KRRRR...
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR CONCERN.
YOU OBVIOUSLY CARE ABOUT HER SAFETY, THOUGH.
!!

STOP!
THAT IS, IF I'M NOT IMAGINING THINGS...MAYBE SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH MY EYES.

I KNEW THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH MY EYESIGHT!

AND THIS PLACE!


DON'T HIDE LIKE A COWARD! COME OUT WHERE I CAN SEE YOU!
UGH. WHY DO I FEEL DIZZY?

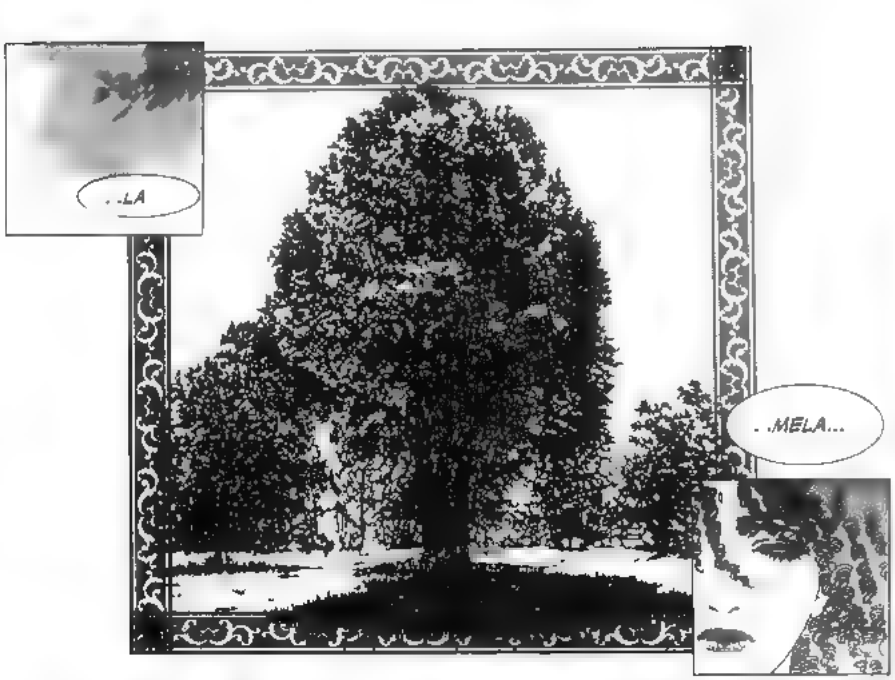
COULD IT REALLY BE?!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME...
...PAMELA.

VC..
...TOR...?!
-IAAAA

YOU HAVE DONE WE... REST NOW.
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, PAMELA.
I TOLD YOU WE'D BE SEE NG EACH OTHER AGAIN.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'VE WAITED TO FIND SOMEONE LIKE YOU...
HAS THE PRINCESS GONE NIGHTY-NIGHT?
AH, YOU HAVE COME.

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE HERBAL TAROT DECK

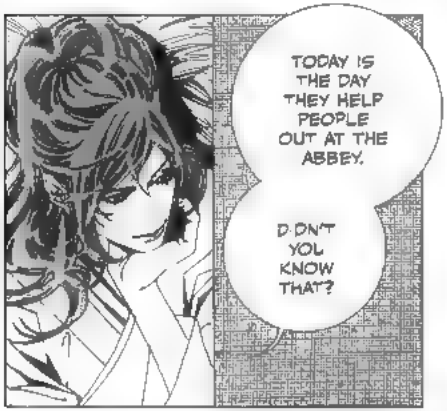
"Nine of Pentacles: Right side up this card signifies material prosperity and the acquisition of wealth; superficiality. Upside down it signifies a threat to ownership of materials or the possibility of danger.


. .LA
. .MELA...

PAMELA, WAKE UP. YOU CAN'T SLEEP HERE.

. ?

다그닥
다그닥


TODAY IS THE DAY THEY HELP PEOPLE OUT AT THE ABBEY.
D.DN'T YOU KNOW THAT?

ISN'T IT NORMAL FOR DRAGONS TO WITHDRAW FROM THE WORLD TO AVOID HUMANS?

...

WHAT'S THE USE OF LIVING BY ONE'S SELF?
IT WOULD BE A BIT DANGEROUS, BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER TO LIVE AMONG OTHERS.

WHY DO I FEEL AS IF I'VE LIVED THROUGH SOMETHING LIKE THIS BEFORE?
다그닥
다그닥
HUH?

THE NECKLACE IS ACTUALLY PERFUME THAT WILL BRING BACK YOUR MOST PAINFUL MEMORY OF THE PAST
IT SEEMS THAT THINGS ARE GOING AS PLANNED.
WHEN YOU GO TO A PLACE OR MEET A PERSON THAT'S CONNECTED TO THIS MEMORY, YOU WILL BE TAKEN INTO A FANTASY WORLD THAT YOU CANNOT AWAKE FROM. OF ALL THE PERFUMES I'VE CREATED, THIS IS MY SECOND-MOST AMBITIOUS. HO HO

I WONDER IF IT'S BECAUSE OF YOUR GOODNESS THAT I CAN ACHIEVE MY MOST ULTIMATE AMBITION.
WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT HER, ANYWAY? SHE'S WEAK, STUPID AND NOTHING SPECIAL TO LOOK AT.
IF ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS TO PAMELA, I'LL MAKE YOUR LIFE MISERABLE.

DAMN IT!
YOU HAVE A LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH HER, I SEE.
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.
SO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO HER? I ASSUME YOU HAVE SOME USE FOR HER.
I WAS BORN WITH A SENSE OF SMELL THAT'S A HUNDRED TIMES BETTER THAN OTHERS'.
BUT WITH THIS GIFT, THE GODS ALSO SENT A CURSE
YOU LOOK LIKE AN OLD WOMAN, BUT I HEAR THAT YOU'RE ONLY IN YOUR 30S. IS THIS WHAT YOU MEAN?
DO YOU THINK I'M REPULSIVE? WELL, EVEN I WEAR A MASK; I'M AFRAID TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR.
YES, PREMATURE AGING. IT'S A DISEASE THAT AGES ME A LOT FASTER THAN OTHERS.
I LIKE BEAUTIFUL THINGS. THINGS THAT LOOK BEAUTIFUL, THINGS THAT SMELL BEAUTIFUL. THAT'S WHY I LIKE PERFUME
BUT THERE'S NEVER BEEN A TIME WHERE I COULD WEAR A BEAUTIFUL SCENT, MYSELF.
I FOUND OUT A SURPRISING FACT ONE DAY, THOUGH.

IN THE 14TH CENTURY, QUEEN ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY WAS ABLE TO WOO THE KING OF POLAND BECAUSE OF A PARTICULAR PERFUME SHE WORE. SHE WAS OVER SEVENTY YEARS OLD.
UNFORTUNATELY, AS TIME WORE ON, THE SECRET OF HOW TO MAKE THE PERFUME WAS LOST.

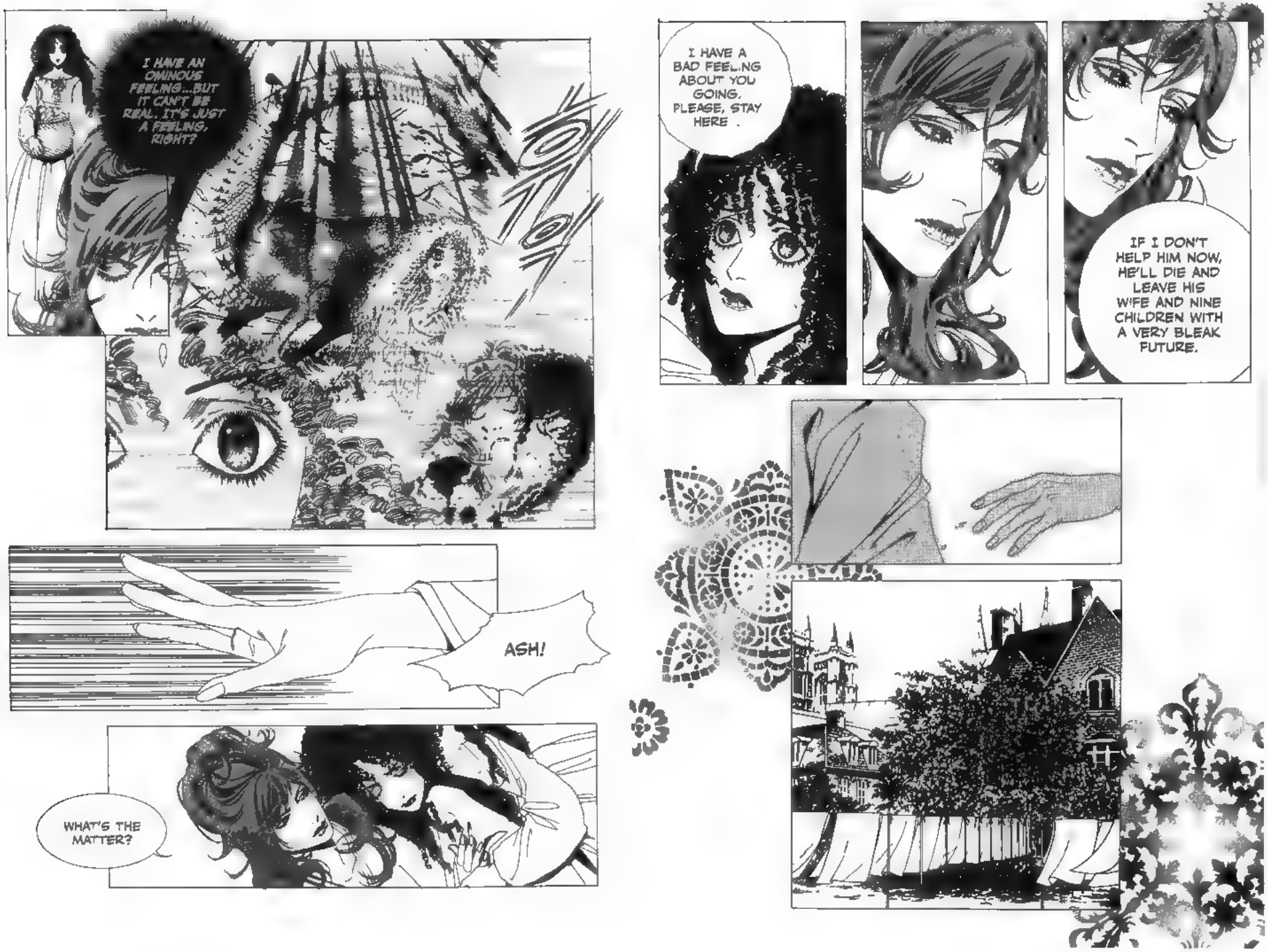
YOU INTEND TO MAKE THE SAME PERFUME, DON'T YOU? THE ONE THE QUEEN WORE...
I WAS SUCCESSFUL IN MAKING IT BEFORE, OR SO I THOUGHT IT'S EFFECT TURNED OUT TO BE TEMPORARY, SO IT WAS A FAILURE
IN ORDER TO MAKE IT WORK THIS TIME, I NEED THE LIFE-STRENGTH OF AN IMMORTAL BEING.
THE NAME OF THE PERFUME IS "QUEEN'S YOUTH." IT WILL BRING BACK LOST TIMES..

I SEE.
I ..HAVE AN IDEA, BUT...
NECROMANCY ISN'T USED BY JUST ANYONE. NOT BY ANYONE BUT YOU, WHO'S REFERRED TO AS THE "QUEEN OF THE DEAD."
YOU USED HIM AT THE CHURCH INCIDENT TOO, DIDN'T YOU?
IT WAS A BIZARRE COINCIDENCE TO THINK THAT HE WAS THE ONE THAT KILLED PAMELA'S LOVER...
MAYBE IT WASN'T A COINCIDENCE HAS IT BEEN FIVE YEARS? HAVE YOU BEEN WELL?
YOU STILL HAVE A GIRLISH FACE.
ASH BECAME A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN. WHEN I LEFT, HE WAS JUST A KID WHO STILL SMELLED OF HIS MOTHER'S MILK.
WHY DID YOU LEAVE LIKE THAT?

TO HIM, YOU WERE FATHER, FRIEND, TEACHER... YOU WERE EVERYTHING.
ARE YOU ANGRY WITH ME? IS THAT WHY YOU WERE A PART OF ASH'S CRUELNESS? YOU'RE LIKE AN OVERPROTECTIVE MOTHER.

DO YOU HATE ME? I JUST WANTED TO SAY HELLO.

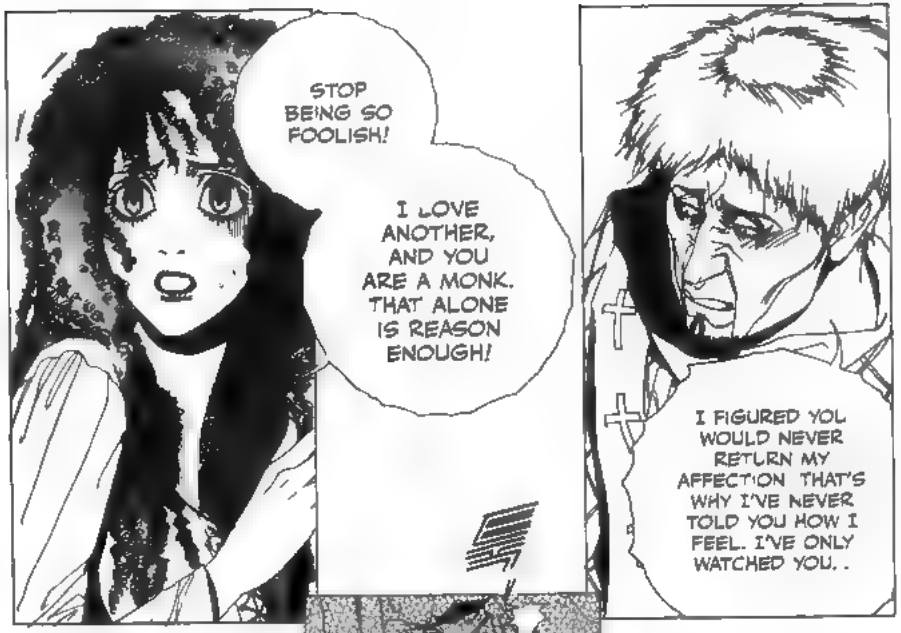
NO. .YOU JUST STARTLED ME, SNEAKING UP BEHIND ME LIKE THAT.
OH...I'M SORRY. THEN. .
THAT MONK IS CREEPY, PAMELA. WHENEVER YOU COME AROUND, HE HIDES FROM SIGHT AND GLARES AT YOU.
R-REALLY?
PAMELA, THERE'S AN INVALID IN TOWN I MUST SEE TO.
I'LL BE BACK TONIGHT UNTIL THEN, CONTINUE TAKING CARE OF THE PEOPLE HERE
WHAT? OH. .OKAY.


I HAVE AN OMINOUS FEELING...BUT IT CAN'T BE REAL. IT'S JUST A FEELING, RIGHT?
I HAVE A BAD FEEL.NG ABOUT YOU GOING. PLEASE, STAY HERE .
IF I DON'T HELP HIM NOW, HE'LL DIE AND LEAVE HIS WIFE AND NINE CHILDREN WITH A VERY BLEAK FUTURE.
ASH!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

CAN YOU COME WITH ME TO THE CHAPEL FOR A MOMENT, PLEASE?
ASH ISN'T HERE...
I KNOW; IT'S YOU I NEED TO SPEAK WITH.
WHAT IS IT YOU NEED TO SPEAK WITH ME ABOUT?
FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, WHENEVER I SEE YOU, MY HEART RACES!
I ADORE YOU. I WANT YOU TO BE MINE!
I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU SAY.

I'M SORRY, I'M IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.
BESIDES, YOU'RE A MONK! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ADORE GOD, NOT ME.
THE PERSON YOU LOVE...DO YOU MEAN *HIM*?
WHY CAN'T YOU LOVE *ME*?

WHY ARE YOU ACTING LIKE THIS?!
IT IS BECAUSE I'M NOT AS BEAUTIFUL AS HE?
OR IS IT BECAUSE I'M POOR AND HAVE NO STATUS?

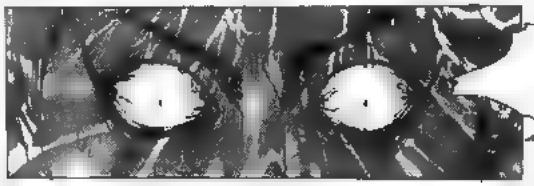

STOP BEING SO FOOLISH!
I LOVE ANOTHER, AND YOU ARE A MONK. THAT ALONE IS REASON ENOUGH!
I FIGURED YOU WOULD NEVER RETURN MY AFFECTION THAT'S WHY I'VE NEVER TOLD YOU HOW I FEEL. I'VE ONLY WATCHED YOU. .

AAAH!
킁
BUT EVEN IF I HAVE TO SELL MY SOUL TO THE DEVIL, I WILL HAVE YOU AS MY OWN!

PLEASE... GET AWAY FROM ME!
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU, NEITHER CAN HE! I'LL KILL YOU FIRST!
AAAH!
PLEASE! DON'T DO THIS, PLEASE!

STAY STILL!

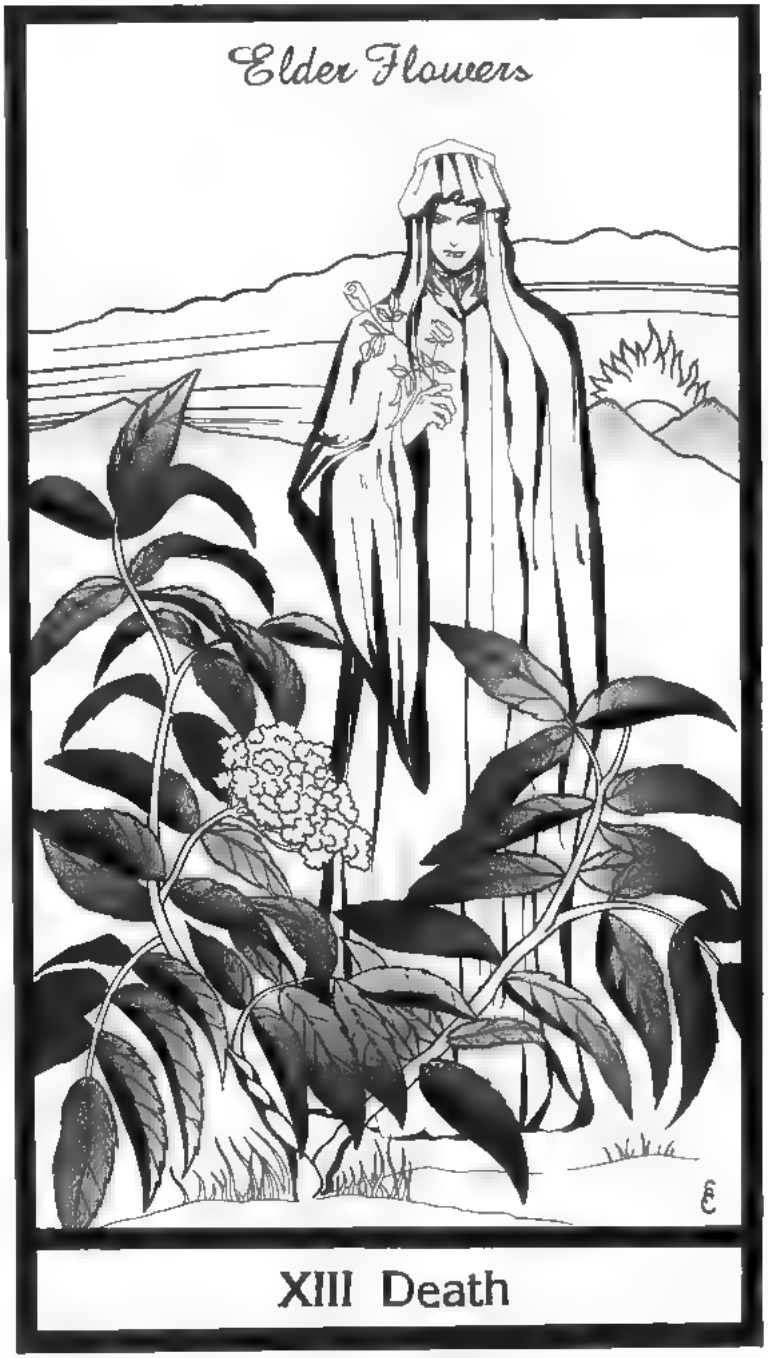
AH!


OOF!

STOP RIGHT THERE!

UHH, UHH.
-HHHA
DID YOU MEAN WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE?
THAT YOU'D SELL YOUR SOUL TO THE DEVIL?
WHY, ARE YOU THE DEVIL OR SOMETHING?

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE HERBAL TAROT DECK




*Death: this card signifies that old things will pass and a new beginning will come

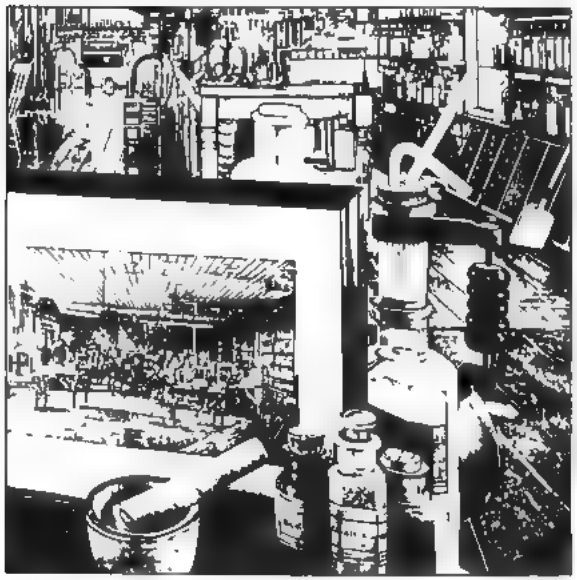
ASH!
ASH!
WAH...
PAMELA.

ASH...?
HE WASN'T HERE A MINUTE AGO, WAS HE?
THE MONK WILL PAY FOR HIS SINS.
HE WILL NEVER REST...HE'LL BE STUCK IN AN EVER-TURNING WHEEL
IF YOU KNEW ABOUT THE MONK, WHY DIDN'T YOU COME HELP ME?!
I WAS SO SCARED...
YOU HANDLED IT WELL ENOUGH ON YOUR OWN.

YOU CAN'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM ME.
MY LIFE IS COMPLICATED ENOUGH WITH MY OWN PROBLEMS.
TOO MUCH WEALTH IS WORSE THAN TOO LITTLE...
IF THE GROUND WAS COVERED WITH JEWELS NSTEAD OF PEBBLES, JEWELS WOULD HAVE NO VALJE
EVEN THE BEAUTY OF FLOWERS MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
IF ONLY I COULD EXPERIENCE THE BEATING OF MY OWN HEART AGAIN...

ALL THIS SOUNDS SO FAMILIAR...
PAMELA, LOVING YOU MORE THAN I LOVE MYSELF WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
MY HEART HAS LIVED SO LONG THAT IT HAS PETRIFIED.
ASH?!
I'M SORRY.
ILL

THIS CAN'T BE REAL
WHERE'S ASH?



WHY IS SHE LIKE THIS?
HAH, ARE YOU WORRIED THAT SOMETHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO HER?

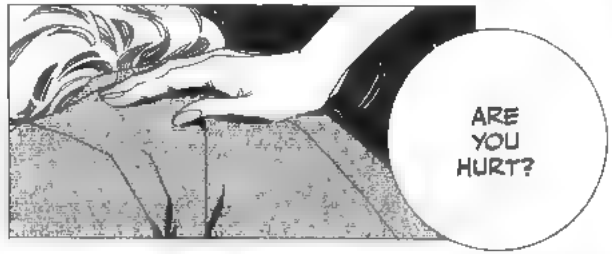
I'M ALMOST DONE...
YOU OLD COCOONED-FACED HAG!
DON'T TALK LIKE THAT.. YOU'RE TAKING ALL THE FUN OUT OF THIS!
WHAT'S FUN ABOUT IT, ANYWAY?
THE INGREDIENT I NEED FOR THE PERFUME IS NOT EASY TO EXTRACT.. I HAVE TO TRY AGAIN.
UHHH...
PAMELA.
WONDERING WHY YOU'RE HERE?

YOU'RE BEING PUNISHED
BAD GIRLS WHO STEAL OTHERS' PRECIOUS BELONGINGS MUST BE PUNISHED.

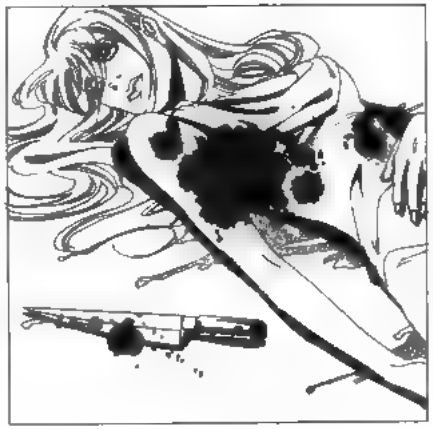
GROAN...

HEY! ARE YOU OKAY?

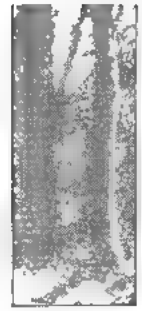
GROAN...


ARE YOU HURT?

NO INGREDIENT COMPARES TO THE SCENT OF A WOMAN WHO ATTRACTS THE OPPOSITE SEX!

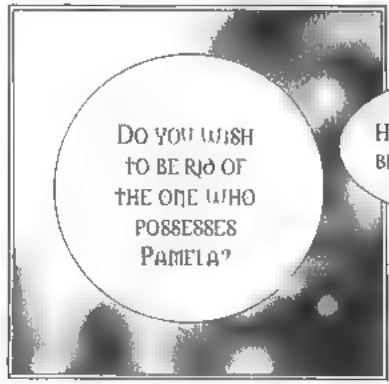


HO HO...
NOW I ONLY HAVE THREE MORE PEOPLE'S SCENTS TO COLLECT

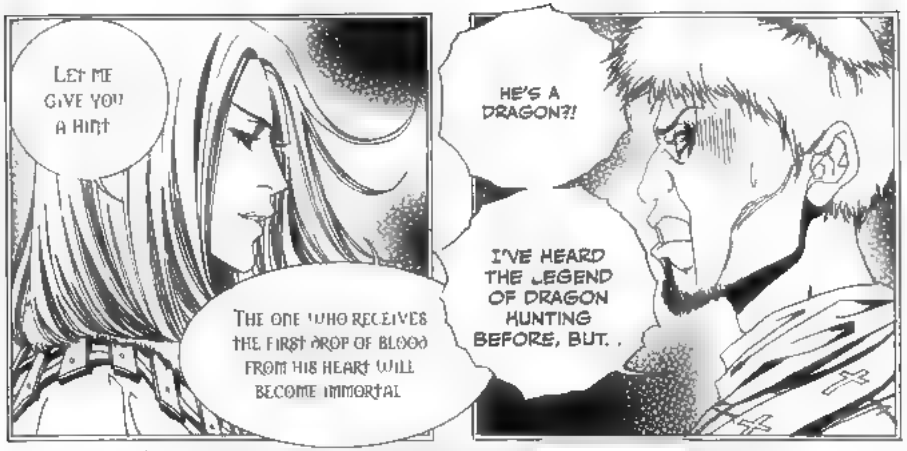


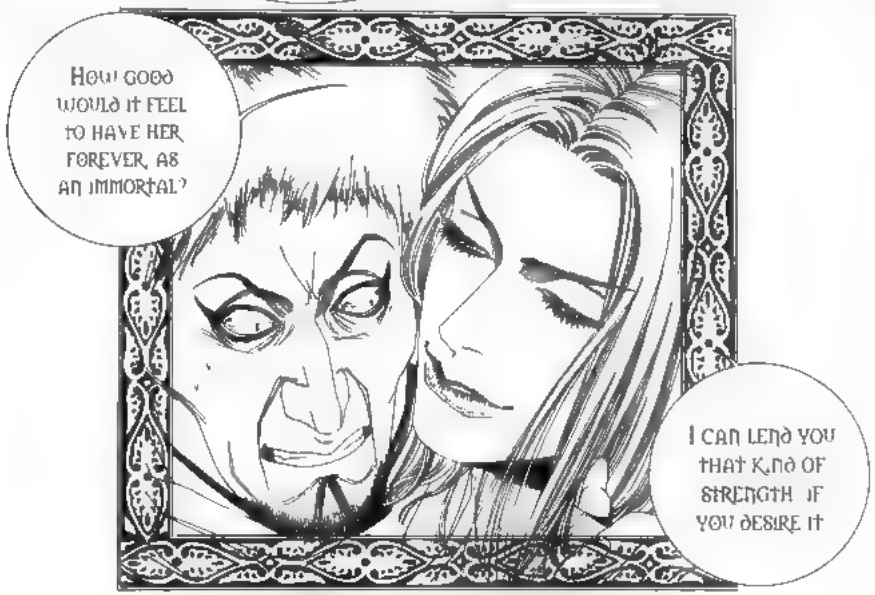
I'm Belial the king of deceit and evil
Your desires guide my way in hell

HAH HAH HAH..
KING OF HELL...YOUR FRIENDSHIP WOULD SUIT ME VERY WELL

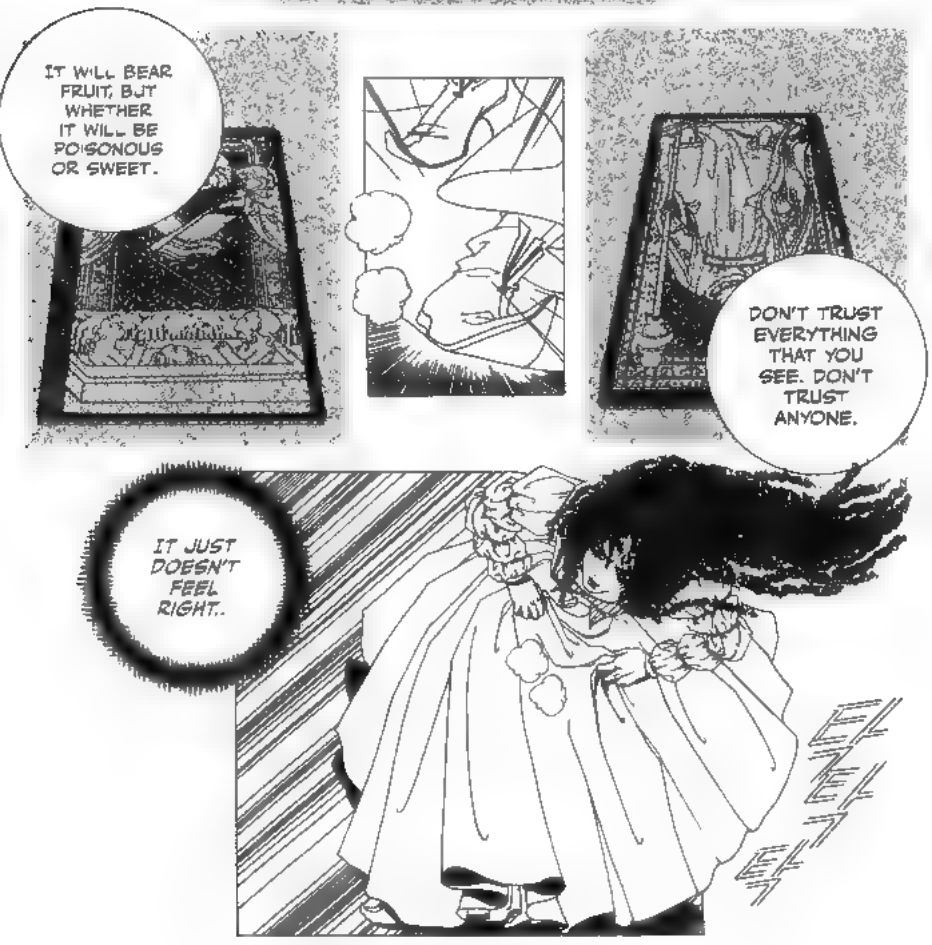

Do you wish to be rid of the one who possesses Pamela?

He's an immortal being you know!
A human like you could not do it


LET ME GIVE YOU A HINT
THE ONE WHO RECEIVES THE FIRST DROP OF BLOOD FROM HIS HEART WILL BECOME IMMORTAL
HE'S A DRAGON?!
I'VE HEARD THE LEGEND OF DRAGON HUNTING BEFORE, BUT. .


HOW GOOD WOULD IT FEEL TO HAVE HER FOREVER, AS AN IMMORTAL?
I CAN LEND YOU THAT KIND OF STRENGTH IF YOU DESIRE IT

.....


IT WILL BEAR FRUIT, BUT WHETHER IT WILL BE POISONOUS OR SWEET.
DON'T TRUST EVERYTHING THAT YOU SEE. DON'T TRUST ANYONE.
IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT..

TO BEGIN A LONG JOURNEY...
..YOU MUST PAY THE PRICE WITH YOUR MOST PRECIOUS THING.

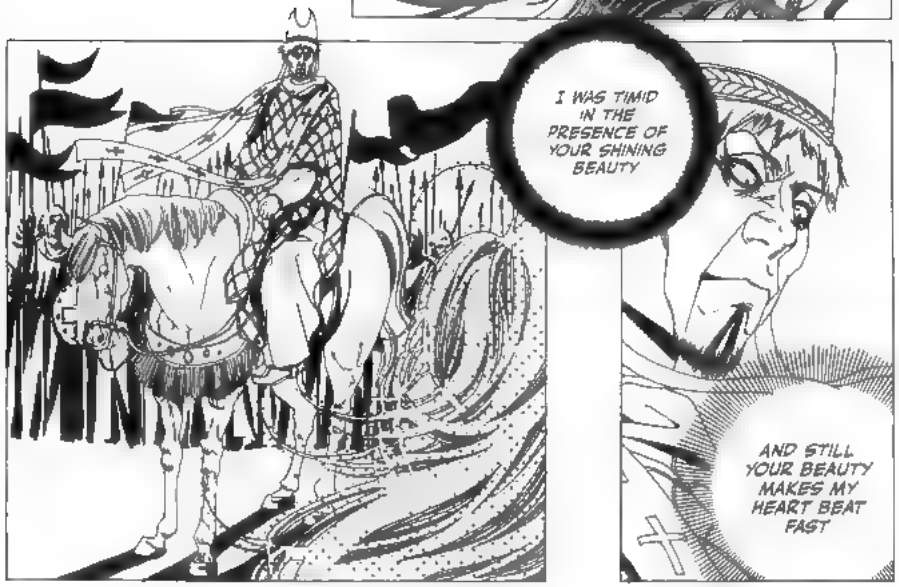
ASH...

WHAT WAS THAT?
SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT...

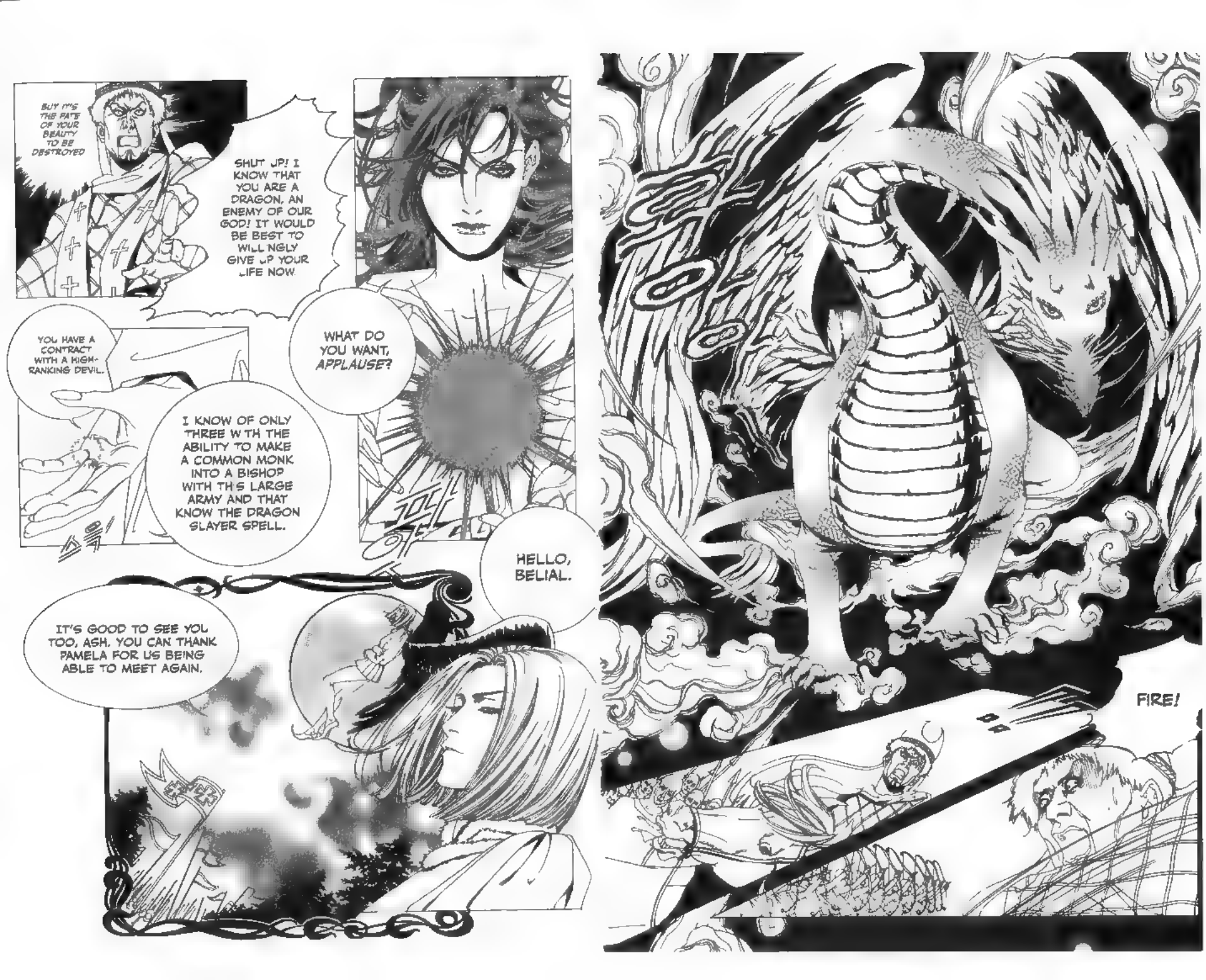
PAMELA...
HE'S AT THE RUINS AT THE SOUTHERN END OF TOWN, BUT A STRANGE POWER IS KEEPING ME FROM HIM.
RUINS? HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO SEE A PATIENT.
ARE YOU ASH'S SYLPH?
WHERE'S ASH?
GO TO ALECTO AND ASK FOR HIS HELP. SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG.

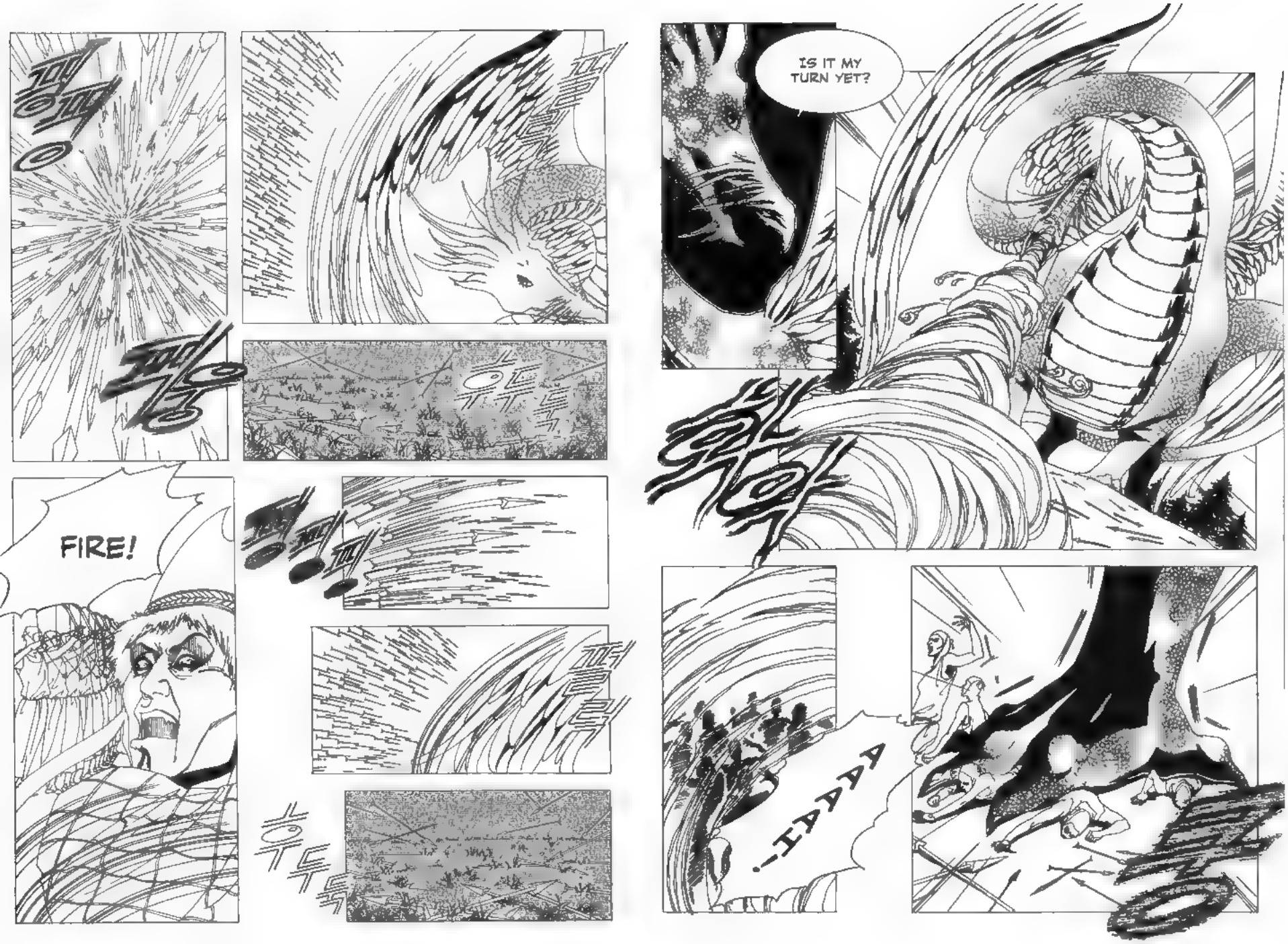
YES, ALECTO'S A JERK, BUT HE'S THE ONLY ONE I CAN ASK FOR HELP....

I'M THE MESSENGER WHO, IN THE NAME OF GOD, JUDGED THE DEVIL'S PERPETRATOR!


I WAS TIMID IN THE PRESENCE OF YOUR SHINING BEAUTY
AND STILL YOUR BEAUTY MAKES MY HEART BEAT FAST

THE ONE WHO HAS A CONTRACT WITH THE DEVIL IS GOING TO JUDGE HIS PERPETRATOR?
THAT'S A LAUGH.


BUT IT'S THE FATE OF YOUR BEAUTY TO BE DESTROYED
SHUT UP! I KNOW THAT YOU ARE A DRAGON, AN ENEMY OF OUR GOD! IT WOULD BE BEST TO WILLINGLY GIVE UP YOUR LIFE NOW.
YOU HAVE A CONTRACT WITH A HIGH-RANKING DEVIL.
WHAT DO YOU WANT, APPLAUSE?
I KNOW OF ONLY THREE WITH THE ABILITY TO MAKE A COMMON MONK INTO A BISHOP WITH THIS LARGE ARMY AND THAT KNOW THE DRAGON SLAYER SPELL.
HELLO, BELIAL.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, ASH. YOU CAN THANK PAMELA FOR US BEING ABLE TO MEET AGAIN.
FIRE!


IS IT MY TURN YET?
FIRE!
-IPPPP

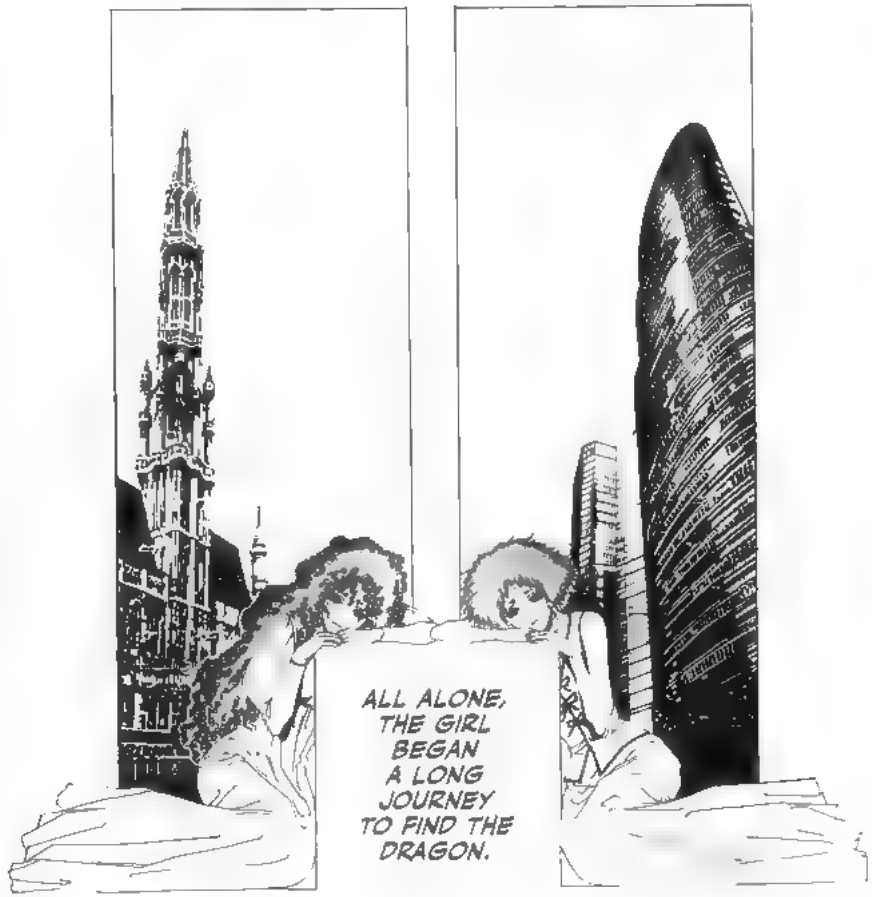
I SEE THAT YOU WILL NOT DIE WITHOUT A FIGHT. WELL, THINGS WILL WORK OUT WHEN THE STAR OF THE SHOW COMES OUT.
PAMELA!
ASH!
SHE'S THE WITCH WHO SIDES WITH THE DRAGON! A.M FOR HER!
-MM-F
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU, I'LL DESTROY YOU, PAMELA
YES... I HAVE SEEN THIS SUPER-EAGLE BEFORE.
AND...
AND...

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE HERBAL TAROT DECK.

*Strength: This card represents the physical and mental courage that does not yield to outward pressure, one who takes action

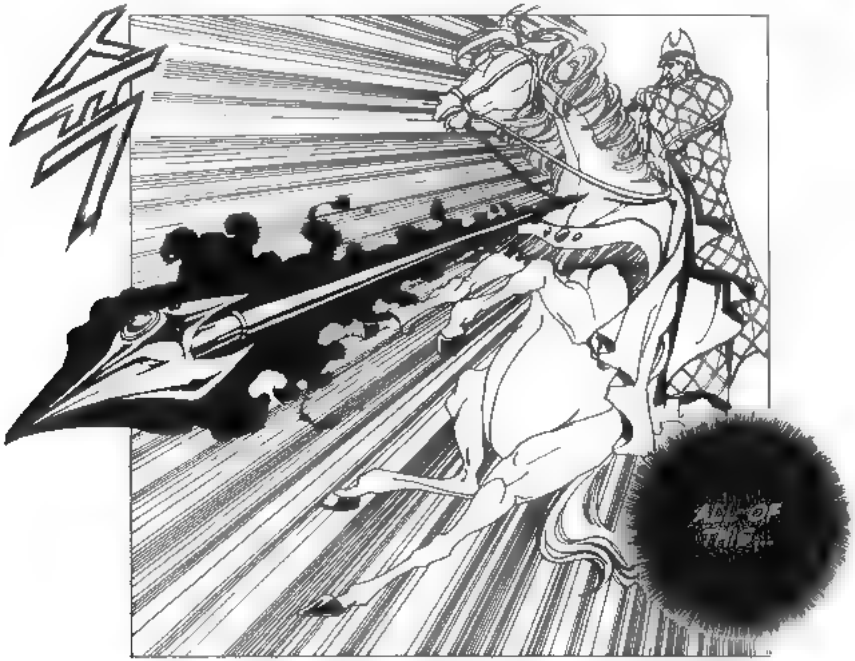
LONG AGO, WHEN THE WORLD OF FANTASY AND REALITY WERE STILL INTERTWINED ..
A DRAGON AND A GIRL LOVED EACH OTHER
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THE GIRL BELIEVED TO BE SO.

ONE DAY, THE DRAGON LEFT AND NEVER RETURNED...



SOB
SOB
SOB
IT WAS FOOLISH OF YOU TO COME...
ASH!
I'M SORRY. I KNEW THAT YOU WENT TO THE MONASTERY, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW *THAT*
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME BEFORE?
HA! YOU'RE STILL A FOOL! BUT THAT'S ALL OVER NOW.
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH I'VE WANTED TO KILL YOU, ASH.
HA HA HA...THIS SPEAR IS THE REWARD FOR SELLING *MY* SOUL!
WHEREVER YOU ARE, I WILL FIND YOU AND STAB IT THROUGH YOUR HEART!

THAT'S RIGHT! I REMEMBER...
FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS I WAS ABLE TO FORGET THIS NIGHTMARE...


THE END OF THE...

HOW AM I RELIVING IT AGAIN?
AM I DREAMING?

ASH!
DID I RETURN TO THE PAST?

NOW, JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE...
...A LITTLE MORE...
IT'S FINALLY COMPLETE! I'M DONE!

CONGRATULATIONS. I'M STILL CURIOUS ABOUT SOMETHING, THOUGH
EARLIER, WHEN YOU MET PAMELA ON THE TRAIN-- YOU HAD A YOUTHFUL FACE. HOW DID YOU MANAGE THAT ONE?
I SPRAYED THIS ON.
WHAT YOU SAW WAS WHAT I WANTED TO LOOK LIKE AND NOW I CAN BE A REALITY.
QUEEN'S YOUTH IS A PERFUME THAT CAN TRULY GIVE ME YOUTH. NO MORE ILLUSIONS ARE NEEDED!
I HAVE WAITED SO LONG FOR THIS DAY.
YOU MUST BE ECSTATIC.

I DON'T HAVE TO LIVE WITH A MASK ANY LONGER!

YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO *LIVE* AT ALL...
YOU'LL DIE EVENTUALLY ANYWAY.
!!
AAAH!

I REPLACED ONE OF YOUR PRECIOUS INGREDIENTS WITH POISON.
I SO WANTED TO BE BEAUTIFUL.. EVEN FOR JUST ONE MOMENT. .
EVEN FOR JUST ONE MOMENT
YOU ARE AN UNDISCIPLINED CHILD.
HAH!
NOW PAMELA MUST RELIVE THE MOST PAINFUL EXPERIENCE OF HER LIFE OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
TELL ME HOW TO WAKE HER UP!
SHE CANNOT AWAKEN WITHOUT TASTING THE BLOOD FROM SOMEONE'S HEART.
IN OTHER WORDS, SOMEONE MUST DIE TO SAVE HER. DO YOU LOVE HER THAT MUCH?
HMM. I GUESS CORA TOLD YOU.
YOU'RE TOO LATE, ANYWAY.

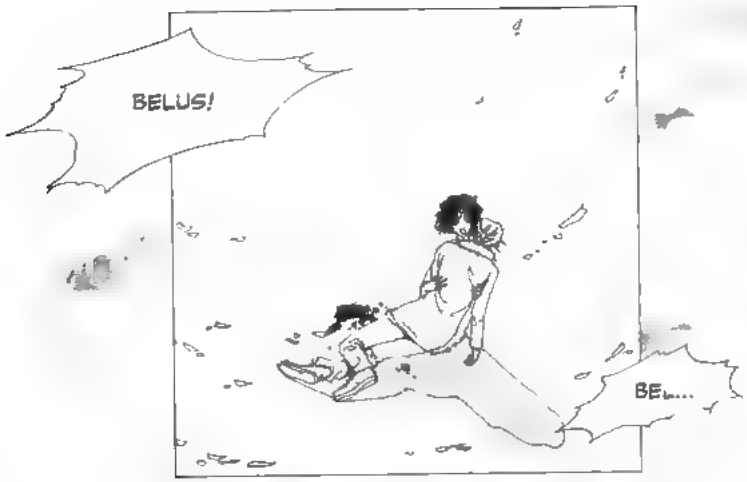
HAH HAH HAH.
DI...DIE...
JUST DIE!
?!!
?

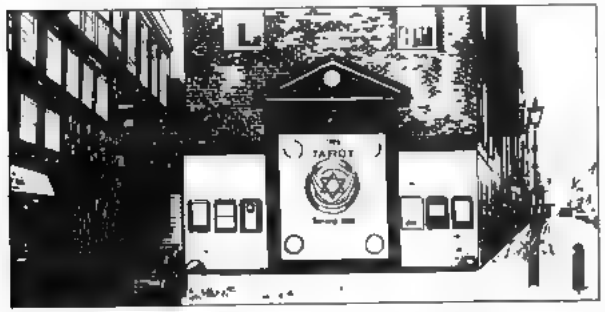
ASH...
I'M SORRY...
ASH...?

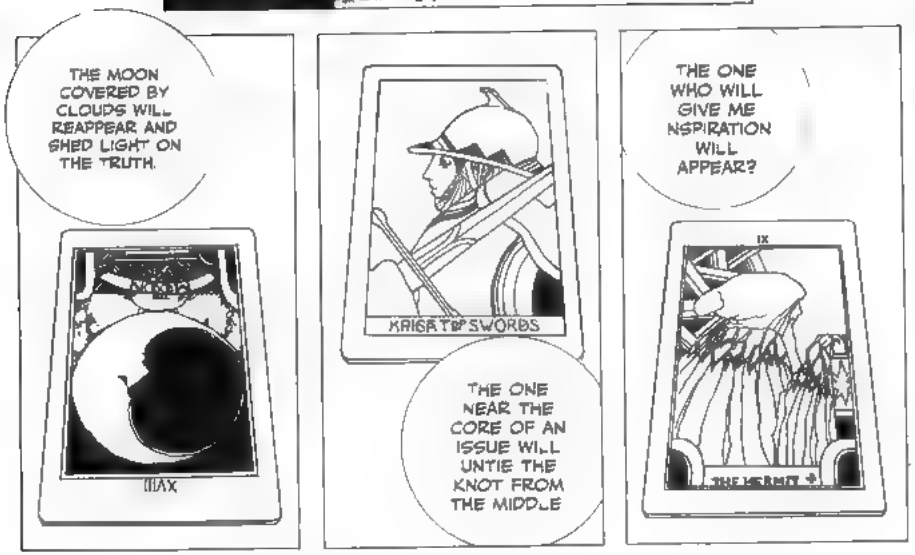
AAAH!
HAH HAH HAH!
NO, THIS ISN'T REAL..
IT'S JUST AN ILLUSION..
ILLUSION OR NOT, THOUGH...

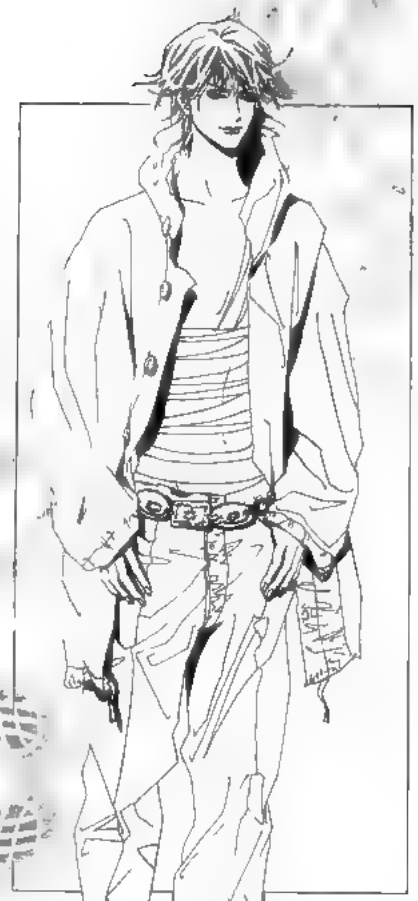
I'VE WANTED TO KILL YOU, VICTOR!
I'VE IMAGINED KILLING YOU A COUNTLESS NUMBER OF TIMES, EVERY DAY FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS.
DIE...
JUST DIE!

ARE YOU BACK?
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
BELUS...?
I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER BE BORED WITH YOU, PAMELA.
BELUS!

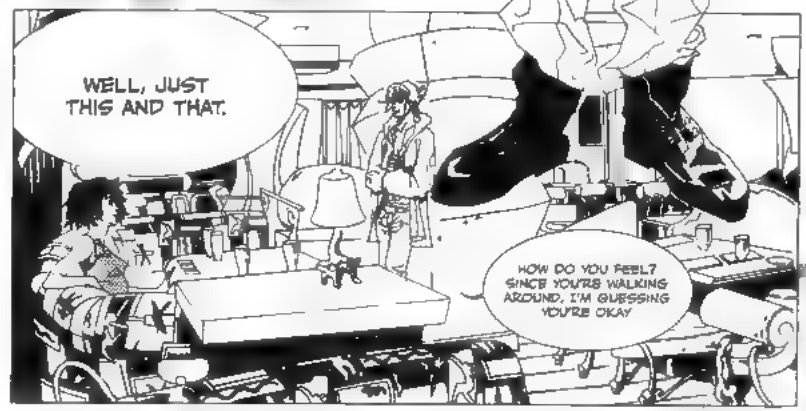


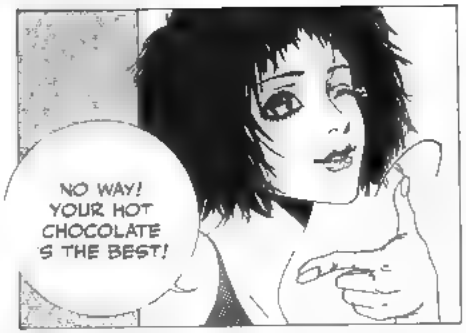


THE MOON COVERED BY CLOUDS WILL REAPPEAR AND SHED LIGHT ON THE TRUTH.
IIIAX
KRIGHT OF SWORDS
THE ONE NEAR THE CORE OF AN ISSUE WILL UNTIE THE KNOT FROM THE MIDDLE
THE ONE WHO WILL GIVE ME INSPIRATION WILL APPEAR?
IX
THE HERMIT



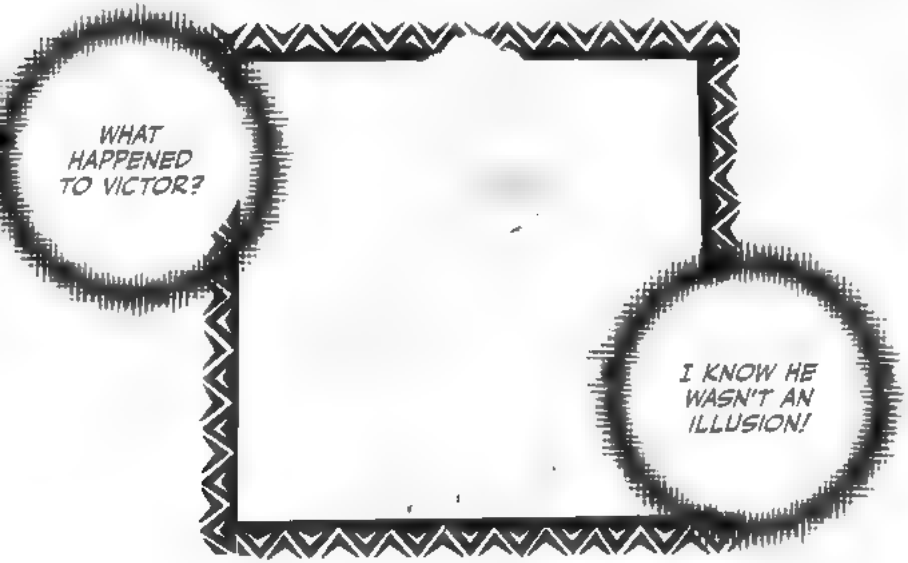
ALTHOUGH MY JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND WAS TERRIBLE, I FEEL LIKE I CAME BACK WITH SOMETHING VALUABLE



HERE YOU GO. I BET THERE WASN'T ANYONE IN SCOTLAND WHO MADE SUCH TASTY HOT CHOCOLATE. HUH?

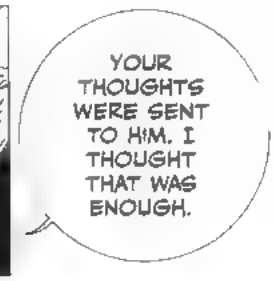

NO WAY! YOUR HOT CHOCOLATE S THE BEST!

OH NO. I SPILLED HOT CHOCOLATE ON YOUR WOUND! I DIDN'T MEAN TO.
AH! IT'S HOT! IT'S HOT! YOU JERK, RIGHT WHERE I GOT STABBED!


WHAT HAPPENED TO VICTOR?
I KNOW HE WASN'T AN ILLUSION!

AAAH!

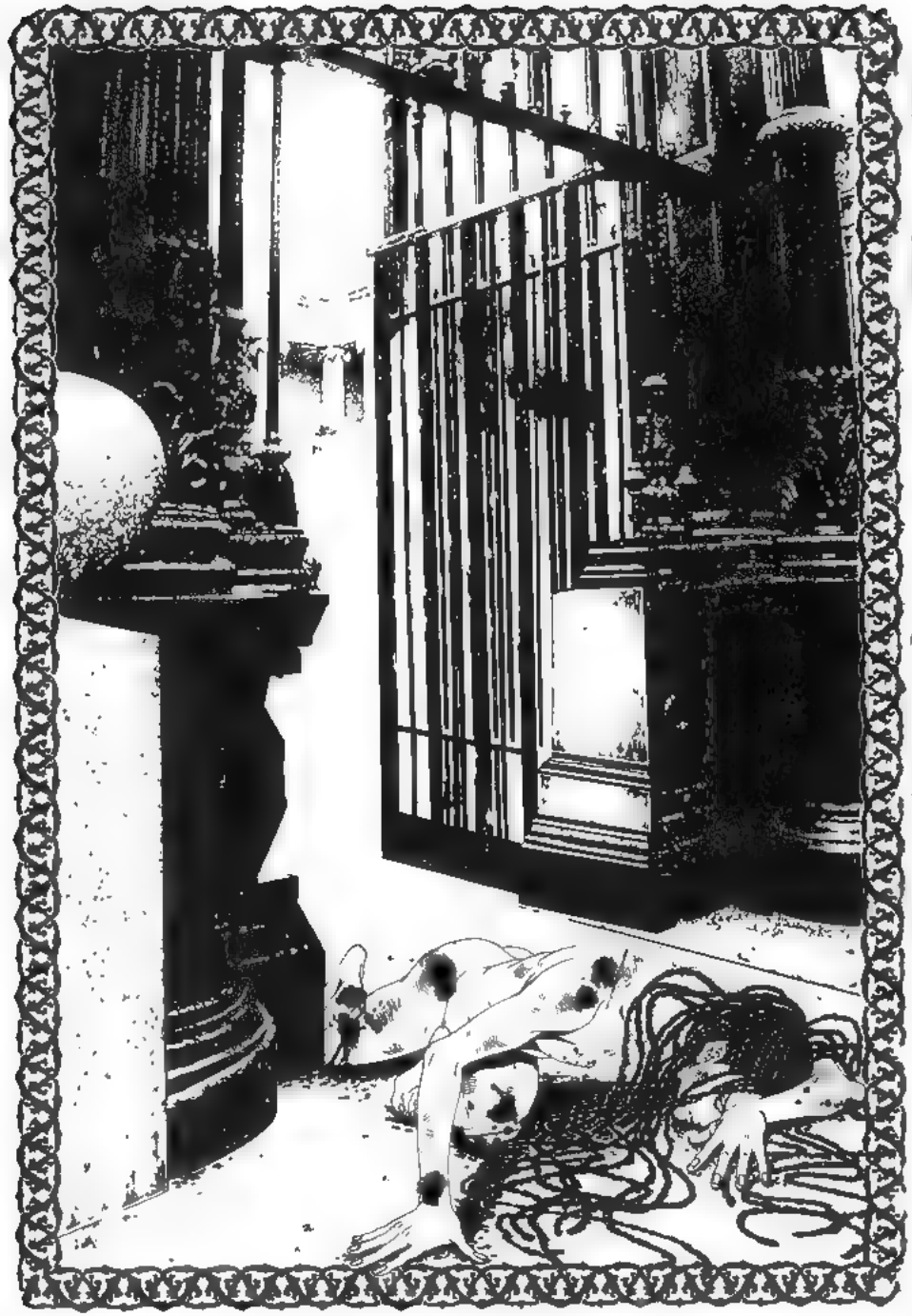
WHY DID YOU INTERFERE?


YOUR THOUGHTS WERE SENT TO HIM. I THOUGHT THAT WAS ENOUGH.

I MAKE THE DECISIONS. YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU TO DO.
PRETENTIOUS BRAT .

PANT
PANT

HUFF
PANT
HUFF
!!!



# KING OF RODS

ILLUSTRATION FROM MORGAN-GREER TAROT

Tree and Long-Horned Beetle

"King of Rods: Right side up this card signifies an honest, conscientious, diligent, and noble person. Upside down it signifies a strict, but gentle, reserved person.

DO YOU NEED SOME HELP?

SEEK OUT A WOMAN NAMED PAMELA. SHE WILL HELP YOU.

TAROT

WOW! IS THIS STRAWBERRY PIE?!
LOOKS DELICIOUS
WOW, PAMELA CAN COOK, TOO?
HO HO, WHAT CAN'T I DO? I'M JUST TOO LAZY TO DO IT VERY OFTEN.
PAMELA'S WON AWARDS FOR HER PIES.

WHAT CONTEST WAS IT? "WHICH COUNTRY MAID CAN MAKE THE TASTIEST PIE"?
AT THAT TIME, PAMELA WAS 500 YEARS OLD AND STILL SINGLE.
OH MY GOSH! ARE YOU OKAY?!
URGH. YOU JUST HIT ME WHERE I WAS STABBED BEFORE
I'M OKAY. I WAS JUST PLAYING AROUND.

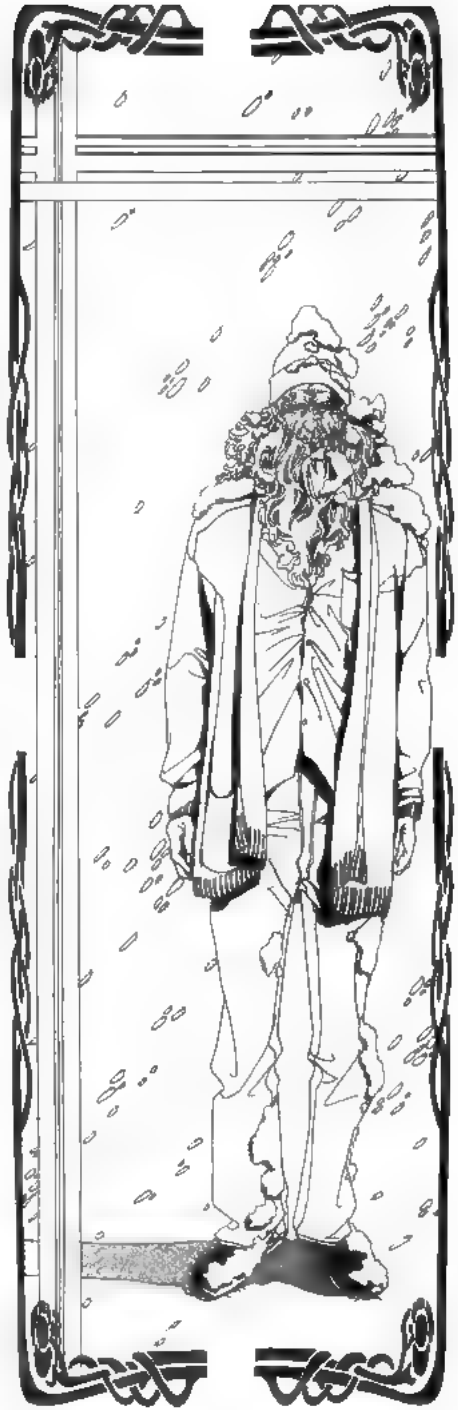
LET ME SEE.
I SAID IT'S OKAY!
UGH!
WELL, I SAID LET ME TAKE A LOOK!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

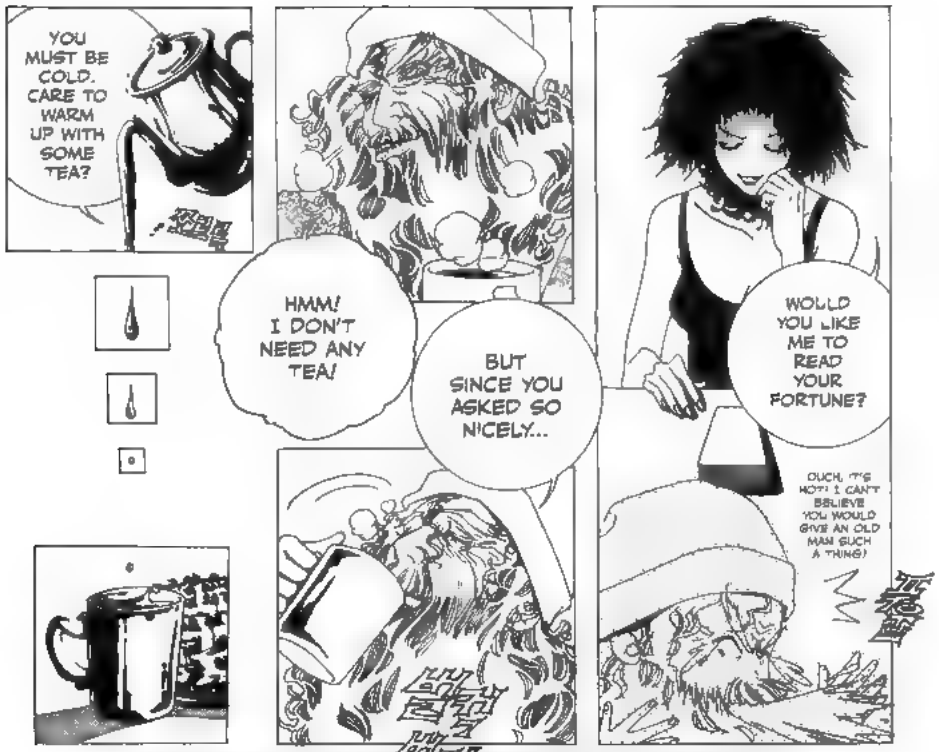
HOW CAN BELUS HAVE A SCAR?
I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...
I SAID IT'S OKAY!

YOU TWO ARE ACTING ALL WEIRD AROUND EACH OTHER SINCE WHAT HAPPENED IN SCOTLAND.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IT MAY NOT SEEM LIKE IT, BUT I'M VERY PERCEPTIVE

THERE'S SOME OLD GRANDPA STARING AT US OUT THERE.




YOU MUST BE COLD. CARE TO WARM UP WITH SOME TEA?
HMM! I DON'T NEED ANY TEA!
BUT SINCE YOU ASKED SO NICELY...
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO READ YOUR FORTUNE?
OUCH, IT'S HOT! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD GIVE AN OLD MAN SUCH A THING!

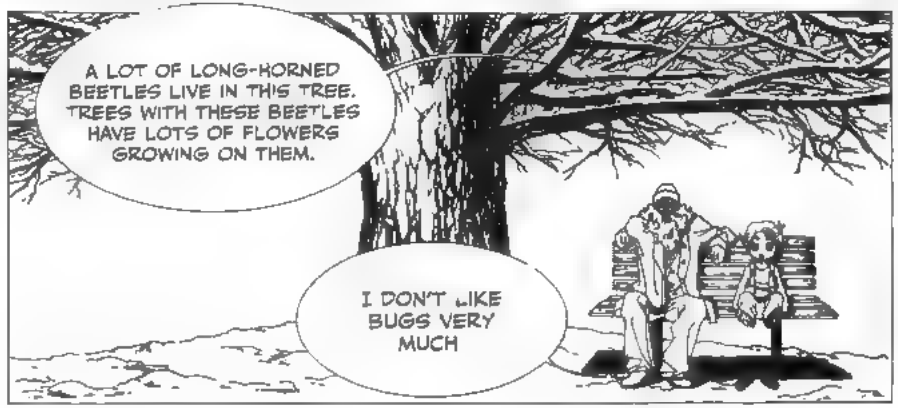
THE TOWER Upside down this card can represent tyranny, something that endangers one's freedom. Right side up it can mean something that weakens one's power

IT'S MY FAULT.
IT'S ALL MY FAULT
IT'S ALL MY FAULT.

WHY ARE YOU BANGING YOUR HEAD ON THIS TREE? I SUSPECT IT'S MORE THAN JUST YOUR HEAD THAT IS HURTING
WAH!
YIKES!

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?
WHY WERE YOU DOING THAT?
WHERE IS YOUR MOTHER?

*AFTER THAT, THE BOY CAME TO SEE ME OFTEN.*


A LOT OF LONG-HORNED BEETLES LIVE IN THIS TREE. TREES WITH THESE BEETLES HAVE LOTS OF FLOWERS GROWING ON THEM.
I DON'T LIKE BUGS VERY MUCH

SHE SAID SHE COULD NO LONGER LIVE WITH ME BECAUSE I BROUGHT HER BAD LUCK.
HMM! ALL HUMAN BEINGS ARE BAD LUCK. THEY CUT DOWN TREES AND POLLUTE THE AIR AND WATER.

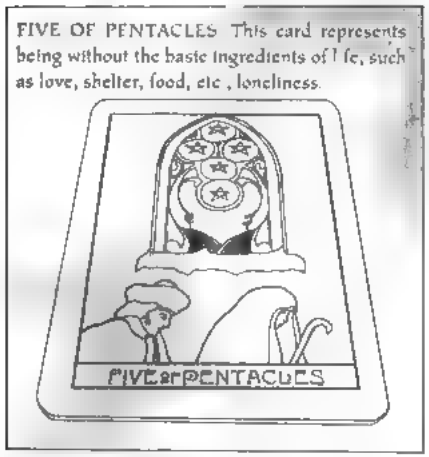
*SO...ALL OF SUDDEN, I STARTED TO WAIT FOR THE LITTLE BOY.*

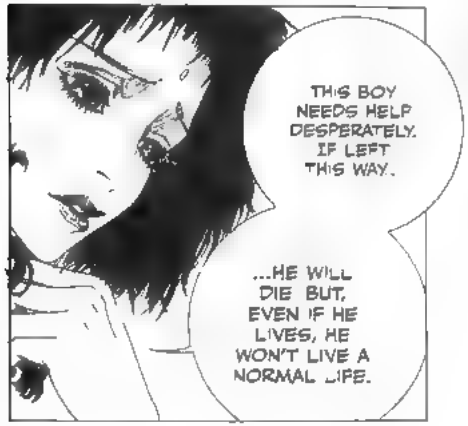
THEY WERE GIVING FOOD AWAY AT CHURCH, AND THEY GAVE ME TWO.
THE PASTOR SAID THAT I SHOULD SHARE ONE WITH A FRIEND.
HERE...
I DON'T LIKE THINGS LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.
BUT THERE ARE TIMES I WANT TO EAT THEM.
A FRIEND...

YOU AND YOUR GRANDSON SEEM TO HAVE A GOOD RELATIONSHIP.
I TOOK A PICTURE BECAUSE YOU TWO LOOKED VERY HAPPY. THAT'LL BE $2.50
I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY!

I'D LIKE TO TAKE SOME OF THIS PIE TO THE BOY.

SURE, I'LL PACK SOME JP FOR YOU. DON'T FORGET TO TAKE IT ON YOUR WAY OUT
NOW, SHALL WE TAKE A LOOK?

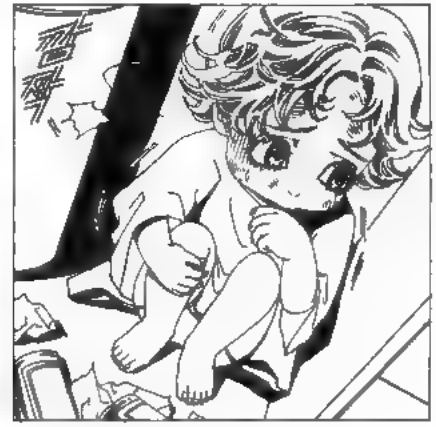

FIVE OF PENTACLES This card represents being without the baste ingredients of l fe, such as love, shelter, food, etc , loneliness.
FIVE of PENTACLES


THIS BOY NEEDS HELP DESPERATELY. IF LEFT THIS WAY.
...HE WILL DIE BUT, EVEN IF HE LIVES, HE WON'T LIVE A NORMAL LIFE.

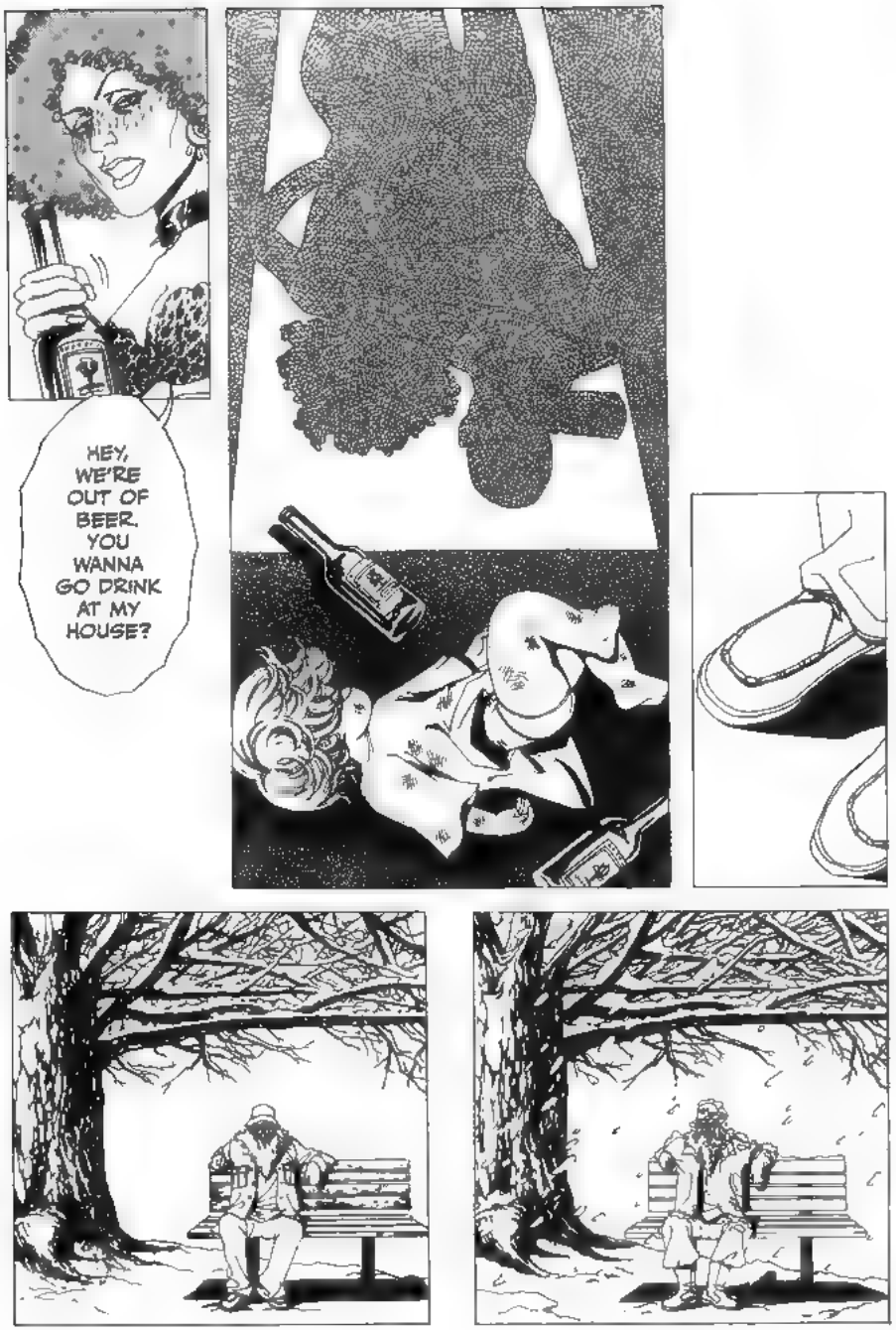
IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF HIM!
HIS FATHER... HE'S WORSE THAN THE DEVIL.

SLOPE

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?!



HM! HE LOOKS AT YOU WITH CONTEMPT LIKE HIS MOTHER USED TO. HOW DARE YOU LOOK AWAY WHEN AN ADULT IS SPEAKING TO YOU?!
YOU BASTARD! I ASKED WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING AT! HOW DARE YOU LOOK AWAY FROM ME WHEN I'M SPEAKING TO YOU!
YOU LITTLE PUKE.
THAT'S HOW HE GOT ALL THE WOUNDS ON HIS BODY.
FATHER! I'M SORRY!
AAAH!
AAAH!
AAAH!
AAAH!
DAMN, DID HE KICK THE BUCKET?


HEY, WE'RE OUT OF BEER. YOU WANNA GO DRINK AT MY HOUSE?

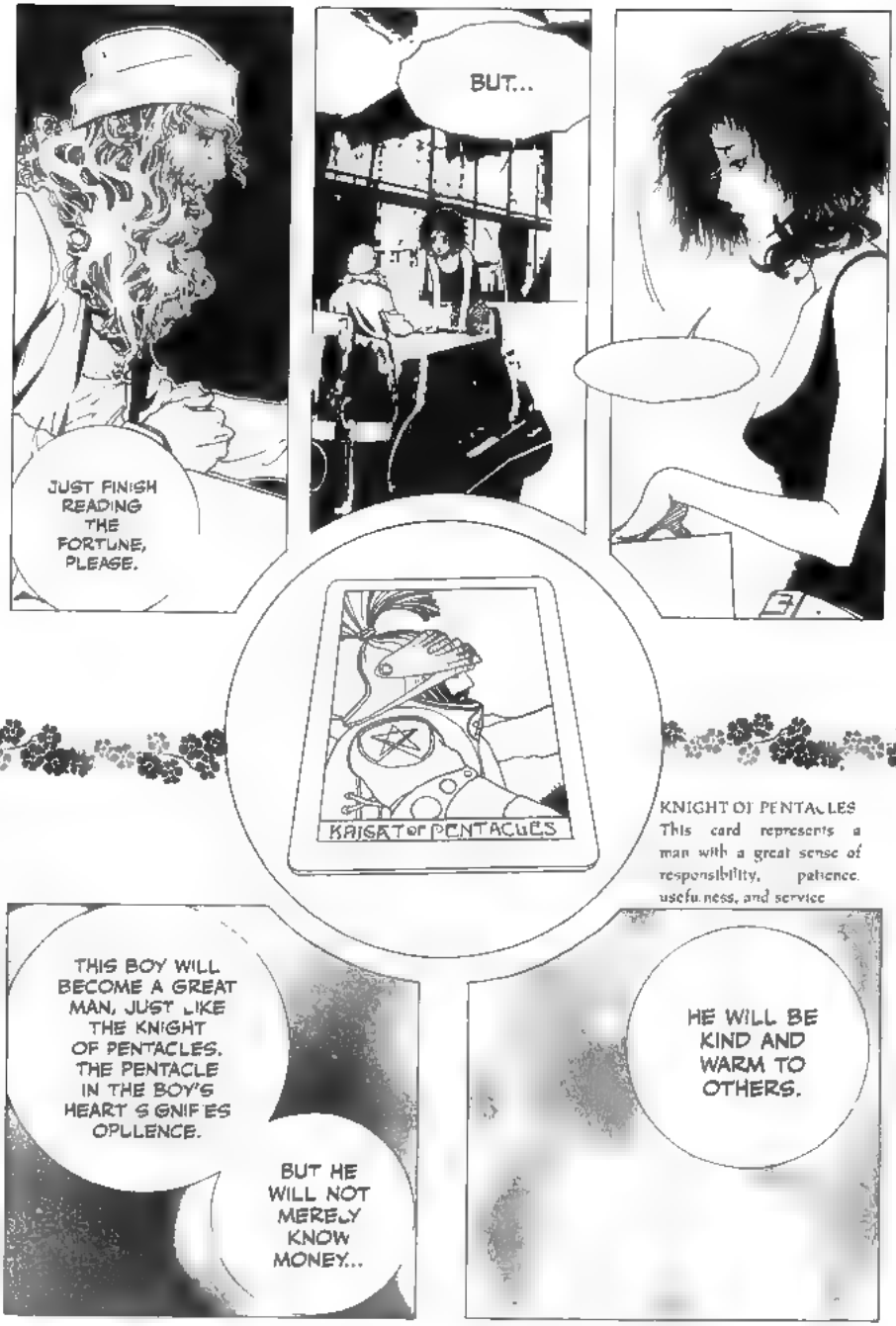
IT WAS STRANGE...HE NEVER SKIPPED A SINGLE DAY, AND THEN SUDDENLY HE DIDN'T SHOW UP AT ALL.
I HAD NOT BEEN TO WHERE THE HUMANS LIVED FOR MANY YEARS, BUT I WAS CURIOUS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BOY.
CLOTHES BANK
SCOPE

LITTLE BOY, ARE YOU HERE?

HE WAS BROUGHT IN WITH PERITONITIS AND RUPTURED INTERNAL ORGANS. HE HAD BEEN IN THAT CONDITION FOR SEVERAL DAYS WHEN WE FIRST SAW HIM...IT'S A MIRACLE HE WAS EVEN ALIVE.
ARE YOU HIS GUARDIAN?

HOW IS HE?
HE HAS TO UNDERGO SURGERY SOON. IF WE WAIT MUCH LONGER, THERE WILL BE NO HOPE FOR HIM.

THAT IS WHY I CAME TO SEE YOU
?
MAY I ASK YOU A FAVOR?
PLEASE... DO IT. I BEG YOU.
WHAT?! BUT...!
IN ALL THE HUNDREDS OF YEARS I'VE BEEN ALIVE, HE'S THE FIRST FRIEND I'VE HAD.
THIS IS THE ONLY THING I CAN DO FOR HIM.


JUST FINISH READING THE FORTUNE, PLEASE.
BUT...
KNIGHT OF PENTACLES
KNIGHT OF PENTACLES
This card represents a man with a great sense of responsibility, patience, usefulness, and service
THIS BOY WILL BECOME A GREAT MAN, JUST LIKE THE KNIGHT OF PENTACLES. THE PENTACLE IN THE BOY'S HEART SIGNIFIES OPULENCE.
BUT HE WILL NOT MERELY KNOW MONEY...
HE WILL BE KIND AND WARM TO OTHERS.

THANK YOU.
I'LL BE GOING THEN..
WAIT! WHAT ABOUT MY FEE?!
TAKE A LONG LOOK AT MY BACKSIDE! YOU WILL PROBABLY RECOGNIZE IT AFTER DOING WHAT I ASKED YOU TO DO.

FATHER... YOU'RE HURTING ME..
PLEASE...TAKE ME... TO THE HOSPITA...
FATHER...

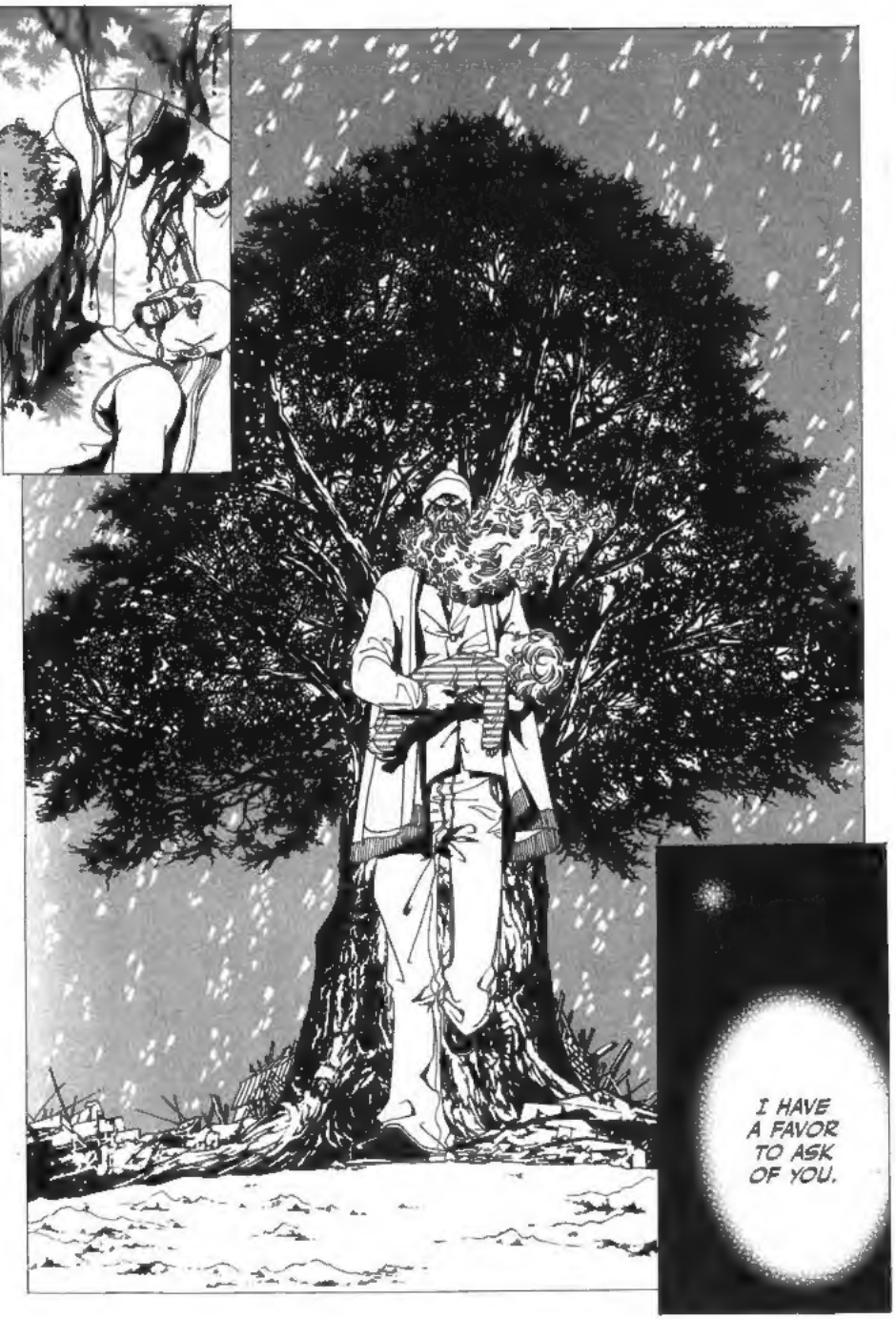
YOU IDIOT! SHUT UP!
I DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO TAKE YOU TO A DOCTOR TH'S TIME!
I HAVE DEBT UP TO MY NECK BECAUSE OF THE BAD LUCK YOU BRING ME!
IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU JUST DISAPPEARED LIKE YOUR MOTHER DID!
AH, THAT'S GOOD!
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT

PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
CAN'T YOU SHUT HIM UP?
ALL THAT PANTING WEIRDS ME OUT.
FATHER . IT... HURTS...

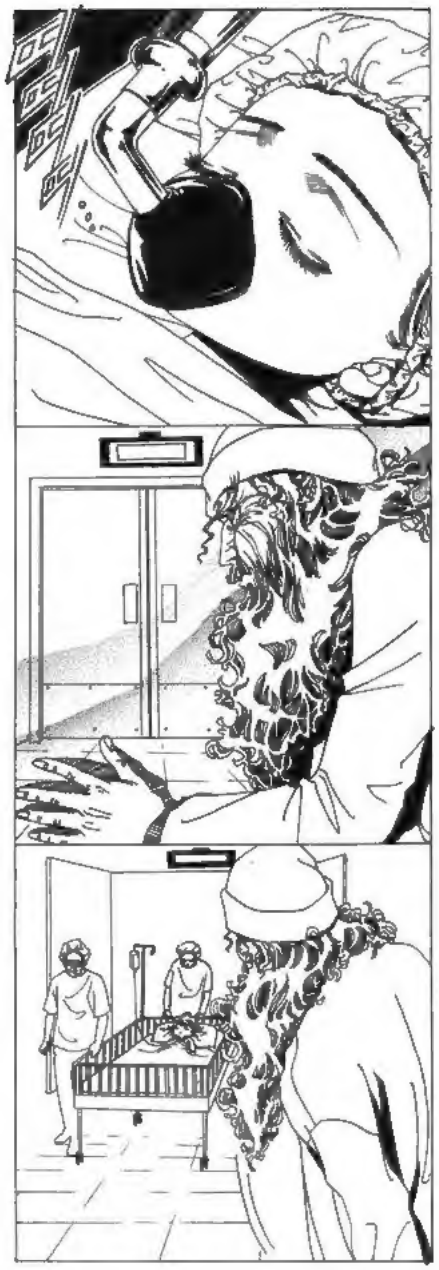
IF I HURT YOU IN ANOTHER SPOT, YOU'LL FEEL FINE EVERYWHERE ELSE. HAH HAH HAH...
AAAH!!

WHO'S THERE?!
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO HARMED THIS BOY?
HE SAID HE WAS HURTING .. I TRIED TO HELP HIM.
WHAT DO YOU CARE WHAT I DO WITH MY SON, ANYWAY?

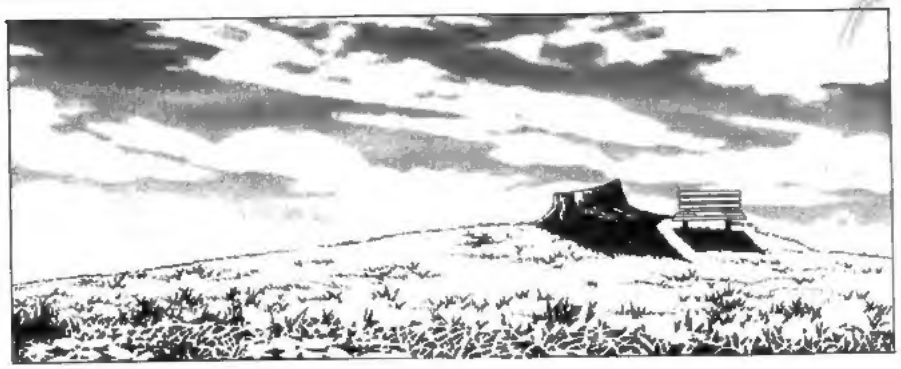
HEY! THAT'S MY SON! PUT HIM DOWN!
HEY, OLD MAN! I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!
WHAT, WHAT IS THAT?!
WHAT?

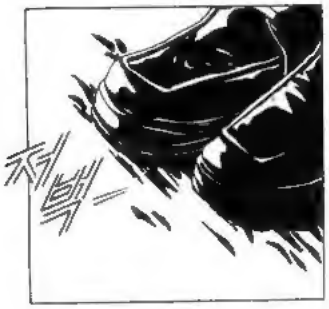

I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU.

ALL I HAVE TO GIVE IS MY TRUNK.



SELL IT AND USE THE MONEY FOR THE BOY'S SURGERY AND FOR HIS UPBRINGING. PLEASE...HE'S MY FRIEND.





YES. THIS TREE, THIS HILL AND THE CLOUDS...

A LOT OF LONG-HORNED BEETLES LIVED IN THIS TREE. I HEARD THAT TREES WITH LONG-HORNED BEETLES LIVING IN THEM HAVE LOTS OF FLOWERS.

I DON'T LIKE BUGS VERY MUCH.

DO YOU LIKE IT HERE?

BUT I THINK THE LONG-HORNED BEETLES ARE OKAY.

YEAH?

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